

## **ROUGH NOTES ON THE ROYAL NAVY IN THE BRISTOL AREA** **1793 to 1814**

### **French Revolutionary War - 1793 to 1802**

On 1 February 1793 the French Republic declared war on both Britain and Holland, initiating a conflict which lasted until 1802, dominating the Continent and spreading over much of the globe. Almost as soon as war had been declared arrangements were being made to allow Bristol ships to join protected convoys and in April 1793 'Felix Farley's Bristol Journal' reported that "Captain Palmer of the Perseus is arrived at King Road, in order to convoy the Bristol trade round the land". However, in Britain there had always been a problem recruiting enough men for the Navy, and in the eighteenth century the Impress Service was the established means of procuring many of those required. To this end by mid-September 1793 Captain Thomas Hawker had been appointed Regulating Captain for Bristol, and was residing at College Green.

These Regulating Captains were in charge of the Impress Service for their district, and, as their name implies, 'regulated' the flow of recruits for the Navy. These comprised volunteers, as well as impressed men and deserters who had been apprehended by the Press Gang. Assisted by one or more Lieutenants and a surgeon, they decided whether the men were fit to serve the King, and quickly became adept in detecting shamming.

Not surprisingly the practice of impressing men for naval service caused a certain amount of friction in the port, a good example being on February 9th 1796 when several Bristol merchants complained that the previous night their ships had been stripped of most of their men although as they said "the impressing from outward bound ships even on the greatest necessity is wholly unprecedented in this port, and the consequences may be highly detrimental both to the owners of these vessels and to the city at large".

Nevertheless, in spite of the best efforts of the Press Gangs there was still a serious lack of recruits for the Navy, and this situation had led to an unusual, and probably illegal, stretch of Government power in February 1795. By an Order in Council an embargo was placed on the merchant shipping and trows then lying in the country's harbours, and an Act was passed in the following month, ordaining that no British vessel should be permitted to clear outwards until the port at which it lay had furnished the navy with the number of seamen prescribed in the statute. The only exceptions to these draconian measures being ships carrying out government duties.

To quicken recruiting, the Admiralty and the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol offered bounties totalling some 25 guineas a head to able seamen, 20 guineas to ordinary seamen, and 15 guineas to Landsmen. These financial inducement proved effective as on Saturday May 23rd 1795 'Felix Farley's Bristol Journal' was able to report that "the number of men requested by the late Act to be furnished for the Navy by the Port of Bristol, was completed on Wednesday, consisting of 200 Able Bodied Seamen; 136 Ordinary Seamen; and 330

Landsmen, making in all 666 men." Then, early in February 1797, the citizens of Bristol had also begun organizing a force of volunteer infantry for local defence, which was to prove a timely move, as during the summer of 1796 the French had been busy planning a three-pronged attack against the British Isles.

The first, which it was planned would take place in late November as a prelude to a large scale landing in Ireland, involved some 5000 men embarking from the port of Dunkirk and subsequently landing on the North East coast, where Newcastle upon Tyne was to be their objective.

That was to be followed by the main effort, the large scale landing in the vicinity of Bantry Bay in Ireland, with Cork as the initial objective. The expedition, which was to embark 15,000 elite troops at Brest, along with artillery, ammunition and stands of arms for the Irish partisans, had as its main aim the establishment of an Irish Republic free from British rule.

Simultaneously, in a second diversionary exercise, just over 1000 men, also embarked from Brest, were to land near Bristol, which they were ordered to destroy. The troops would then re-embark and cross the Bristol Channel, to land on the right bank of the River Taff, and, skirting Cardiff, move on through the border counties to Chester and thence to Liverpool, their second objective, where they hoped to terrorize the townsfolk into paying a heavy ransom to prevent their destruction. The planners, in addition, hoped that the poor classes in England would rise in support of the landings and assist in the overthrow of the existing order of things.

Although the first two operations turned out to be complete fiasco's, with no French troops even managing to get ashore, the planned attack on Bristol went ahead at a time which was probably Britain's most desperate moment during the whole of the war.

The whole undertaking, however, got off to a very bad start, with the expedition to Newcastle proving to be a total fiasco despite the careful preparations that had been made. The military force, composed mostly of foreign deserters, failed to regard the whole business with much enthusiasm, and the transports which set out from Dunkirk on November 9th were forced back into port after a voyage of only a few miles along the coast.

The late summer and autumn days of 1796 were also spent in preparing the fleet at Brest for the Irish landing. Although it comprised some 17 ships of the line, with frigates, transports, and smaller craft it was well under strength, and to add to its troubles soon encountered bad weather after leaving Brest on December 16th. Nevertheless the majority of the ships arrived off Bantry Bay on the 21st, in the teeth of a rising easterly gale. Then, for a fortnight, almost all the French ships lay at times anchored in the Bay, but not all at the same time, while at the end of the month they reluctantly turned for home having been unable to land any troops, driven back to France by the inclement weather, and not by the active intervention of the Royal Navy.

The subsidiary operation to Bristol had been very much the brain child of the brilliant 28 year old General Lazare Hoche, who in the summer of 1795 had ended a three year insurrection in Brittany and La Vendee, when he succeeded in driving the monarchist rebels into the sea at Quiberon Bay. Here he had seen English aid, English ships, and English money, while the resulting holocaust in the west had implanted in his mind a bitter hatred of England, and a burning desire to carry the war across the Channel.

At Quiberon an immense booty of stores landed by the English had fallen into Republican hands. It comprised some 70,000 muskets, thousands of pairs of shoes, bales of British uniforms, casks of brandy and rum, as well as best Irish salted provisions. Hoche noted them all with satisfaction and conceived the idea of using these stores to equip an expedition to England as a fitting revenge.

The troops to be employed were the 1050 volunteers belonging to the so called Second Legion of Francs, soon to be known as the Black Legion on account of their dark brown dyed British jackets. They were recruited from "some of the most abandoned rogues in the prisons of Rochefort, Nantes, and Lorient", and included some hundred émigrés captured at Quiberon, and let out on condition of taking part in the expedition, as well as a few Irish and English prisoners of war.

The overall commander was to be Colonel William Tate, a fanatically anti-British American citizen then aged about 70, who was unable to speak a word of French. The second-in-command was a Frenchman, Chef de Bataillon Le Brun, while the officers included three Irishmen, Captains Tyrrell and Morrison, and Lieutenant Barry St Leger, a native of Limerick. The naval command was to be entrusted to Commodore Jean Joseph Castagnier, a privateer captain of the American war, who had been associated with Hoche in the successful defence of Dunkirk some years earlier.

Tate's orders stated that "the destruction of Bristol is of the very last importance, and every effort should be made to accomplish it." He was informed that "for this purpose, it will be proper to reconnoitre the Mouth of the Severn in the day-time, and sail up the Avon at night-fall, within five miles of the town, where the landing should be made on the right bank in the greatest silence". The French troops, who were also supplied with combustible material, were then to "advance rapidly in the dark, on that side of Bristol which may be to windward, and immediately to set fire to that quarter." The instructions went on to state that "if the enterprise be conducted with dexterity it cannot fail to produce the total ruin of the town, the port, the docks, and the vessels, and to strike terror and amazement into the very heart of the capital of England".

The troops would then re-embark and cross the Bristol Channel, to land on the right bank of the River Taff, and, skirting Cardiff, move on through the border counties to Chester and thence to Liverpool, their second objective, where they hoped to terrorise the townfolk into paying a heavy ransom to prevent their destruction. The planners, in addition, hoped that the poor

classes in England would rise in support of the landings and assist in the overthrow of the existing order of things.

This raiding force, transported to the British coast aboard a squadron comprising the frigates *Resistance* and *Vengeance*, the corvette *Constance*, and the lugger *Vautour*, finally set sail on February 16th 1797. They had reached the entrance to the Bristol Channel early on the morning of the 20th, and spent the day in tacking in an attempt to get up to Bristol. In the afternoon they anchored off Lundy Island to await the flood tide and got under way again after dark, but Commodore Castignier, despite all his efforts of anchoring on the ebb and making sail only with the flood, was unable to approach the City.

Having sailed up the Bristol Channel as far as Porlock, he found that the strength of the flood tide was insufficient to help him against the wind. The weather looked threatening and strong winds were expected from the east. He decided, therefore, to give up the attempt against Bristol, and instead made for St George's Channel to attempt a landing at the alternative site in Cardigan Bay.

The landing near Fishguard was, however, a total failure with all the French troops being rounded up within a couple of days by a mixed force made up of the Cardiganshire Militia, the Pembroke Fencibles, the Fishguard Fencibles, the Castlemartin Yeomanry, and a group of sailors from Haverfordwest armed with eight nine-pounder guns, all under the command of Lord Cawdor. During the landing and the skirmishing which followed the French lost twelve men killed, and the British two, before the final surrender on Goodwick Sands on the afternoon of 24 February.

More problems, however, still lay in store for the French as on the return journey the *Constance* and the *Resistance* had the misfortune to run into two 36 gun British frigates, which captured both vessels after a running fight. They were subsequently incorporated into the Royal Navy as HMS *Constance* and HMS *Fishguard*.

In Bristol, early news was received of the French squadron's activities off Lundy in an affidavit from John Gay, a channel pilot, who sighted the ships early in the morning of 20 February 1798, four miles to the westward of the island of Lundy. Gay watched their movements that day and the next, and put in to Ilfracombe early in the morning of the 22nd to communicate his news to Lieutenant Gayton, local Naval officer at that port, and 'expresses' were sent off to Barnstaple and Plymouth. A troop of the Suffolk Fencible Cavalry, then stationed at Bristol, set out for Walton in Gordano to oppose a possible landing, but news of Tate's surrender at Fishguard quickly came in, and matters calmed somewhat.

Bristol, however, was soon thrown into greater consternation by reports of another landing near St David's contained in an express from General Rooke at nearby Haverfordwest, to Colonel The Marquis of Buckingham, and dated midnight 28 February. It instructed him and his Royal Buckinghamshire Militia,

then forming the major part of the Bristol garrison, to proceed at once to Pembrokeshire, together with the remainder of the Suffolk Fencible Cavalry, and the 13th Regiment of Foot, which was temporarily in Bristol, having been en-route for Ireland.

This alarm, while it lasted, caused greater excitement in Bristol than the real landing had done. At about 10 o'clock on the morning of 2 March drums beat to arms, and the troops paraded in College Green. The principle merchants of the city offered wagons and horses to convey the baggage and bread to Pill, where the troops were to embark in skiffs for Tenby, to save the delay which would be occasioned by a tedious march through Wales. Thousands of people congregated in College Green to see the troops leave to fight the enemy. A bystander put half a crown in a hat, and in a few minutes 90 guineas had been collected from the crowd to buy comforts for the troops.

The Bristol Regiment of Volunteer Infantry, which had formed less than two weeks before, realized that the number of troops left to guard the French prisoners at the Admiralty Prison at Stapleton was far from adequate, and accordingly offered 30 men to assist with guard duty that evening. Their offer was accepted by Colonel Buckingham and "they marched, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Baillie, through the City, amidst the acclamations of such multitudes of people as were never before seen collecting in the streets". However, just as the troops were about to embark at Pill, the King's Messenger arrived in Bristol on his return journey from Pembrokeshire, with a despatch from Lord Edward Somerset, General Rooke's ADC, countermanding the troops, as the news of the enemy landing at St David's turned out to be false.

The Bristol Volunteer Infantry had just reached the city confines when they were recalled, their services now unnecessary, while the troops themselves initially received the news from a passing Mail Coach. The false alarm it seems was originated by a fleet of 18 boats laden with lime stones coming ashore during the evening of 28 February. The act of throwing the stones overboard having been mistaken for a large body of men jumping ashore.

Information was then received that Bristol had been the primary objective for the French troops who had landed at Fishguard. This came as an unpleasant surprise to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City, who at a special meeting held on 14 October 1797, resolved to apply to the Duke of York, the Commander in Chief of the Army, for an Engineer to survey the coast of the Bristol Channel and to report "what places ought to be fortified for the better security of the harbour and security of Bristol".

They also petitioned the Admiralty stating that "there is no one point of land or place between Lundy and Kingroad in any way fortified" and recommending that two gunboats be stationed in the Bristol Channel, one near Portishead Point, and the other between Portishead Point and Lundy Island, in order to provide some protection for the Port of Bristol. As a result, on 10 November Colonel John Eveleigh of the Royal Engineers was ordered from Portsmouth to Bristol, where he prepared a proposal for the local defences. As a result, on

27 November 1797 he reported that his first recommendation was to establish a chain of four signal stations to be situated on Brean Down, Steep Holm, Flat Holm, and at Lavernock Point, near Penarth, with two gunboats patrolling between them. In this way it was considered that timely warning of enemy approach would be given to the military in Bristol to enable them to assemble their forces, augmented within two or three hours by "an able body of 20,000 citizens ready for the pike or any other arm that might be given them".

From such stations, signals incorporating flags, balls, cannon, smoke beacons, or other fires might be employed, and by extending the line, Wales and the western counties of England would be immediately warned of the presence of enemy ships in the Bristol Channel. This would enable the Milford Haven to Waterford packet to convey up to date information to the Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Squadron at Cork, which might then successfully cut off the enemy's retreat.

He further recommended that a battery of three 24 pounders mounted on traversing platforms should be erected on Portishead Point, where any enemy ship heading for the River Avon would have to pass within point blank range. If, however, the enemy was to arrive in force and reach the River Avon, the gunboats would be able to run with the tide, form at the mouth of the river and co-operate with the proposed battery at Portishead, or alternatively act as independent floating batteries.

The report was favourably received by Government and on 25 November "Felix Farley's Bristol Journal" reported that the Aimwell and Conquest, two very powerful gunboats, under orders of the Commander of the Squadron of His Majesty's Ships at Milford, are to be stationed in such parts of our channel as the Mayor may deem proper." These vessels, both of about 150 tons, were each armed with 12 guns and were of fairly modern design, having been specially constructed in 1794.

The first to arrive, on 27 December 1797 from Kinsale, was the Aimwell, commanded by Lieutenant Francis Kinneer, while the Conquest, under Lieutenant William Green, which had been stationed near the Isle of Wight, finally moored in Kingroad on 13 January 1798. The Conquest, however, was only destined to stay for a relatively short time, being re-deployed to Kinsale on 21 November 1798, but the Aimwell was to remain on station in Kingroad until 3 January 1802, when no further threat remained from the French.

Eveleigh had also noted that within two or three hours of an attack alarm being raised some 20,000 robust Bristolians could be probably assembled and, if suitably armed, be used to defend their city.

The majority of these recommendations were enthusiastically received locally, but it was the opinion of "many respectable professional men" that a second gun battery should also be constructed at Avonmouth. However, although the government finally agreed with this proposal a request by Lieutenant General James Rooke, the commander of the Severn Military District, for an officer

and 24 Invalid Artillery men to man the batteries resulted in only two NCO's and four gunners being allocated to each.

On 26 April 1798 the Mayor of Bristol wrote to Henry Dundas, Secretary of War, stating that " although the battery about to be erected by Government at Portishead Point may be an excellent defence for this port in future, yet it is the opinion of many respectable professional men that during the considerable space of time this battery will be erecting, temporary ones should be immediately formed at this point, and on each side of the Mouth of the Avon." The letter went on to state that "we are severely destitute of artillery in this city and neighbourhood, except only two field pieces attached to the Berkshire Militia." These were located at the temporary field battery on Brandon Hill erected and manned by the various Militia units which provided the city's garrison.

The Mayor's comments were certainly taken into account, and finally two gun batteries, each armed with four captured French 36 pounders were approved. These were to be located on land owned by the Corporation of Bristol at Portishead Point, on the site of the old Civil War Royalist battery, and at King Road Farm, Avonmouth on land owned by Lord de Clifford, both batteries being erected under the direction of Lieutenant William Rudyard of the Royal Engineers during the summer of 1798. However, they were subsequently, and somewhat inadequately, manned by a detachment of four NCOs and eight gunners of the Invalid Artillery, under the command of Corporals Ross and Muirhead.

In April 1798 the British Government, by then fully aware of the French invasion plans, instructed "that all the launches and long-boats belonging to merchant ships in the different ports, capable of carrying cannon or cannonades, should forthwith be armed for the purpose of being employed as gun boats at the mouth of the rivers, and in creeks, ports, or bays of our coast". James Hillhouse a Bristol shipbuilder, subsequently converted two such vessels, a Pill tow-boat and a ship's long-boat, each armed with a single cannonade at a total cost to the Corporation of Bristol of a little over £63.

May 1798 saw an offer made through the Mayor of Bristol and Master of the Society of Merchants, by the Pilots and other inhabitants of Pill "to serve as volunteers on boats in the river and within the Port of Bristol, from the Passage eastward, to the Holmes westward: and on shore in the exercise of great guns in the immediate neighbourhood of Bristol, and on the shores of its river and port within the limits above mentioned". The volunteers, however, stipulated that whenever called out they wished to be under the command of the General appointed to command the City of Bristol, and here a difficulty immediately arose as the County of Somerset was not at that time within the jurisdiction of Lieutenant-General Rooke either as commander of the Bristol Garrison or the Severn Military District.

The following month the name of Lieutenant John Harford RN was put forward as a possible commander for the Loyal Pill and Port of Bristol Volunteer Association, but no satisfactory reply was ever forthcoming from government,

and it is doubtful if the leaderless volunteers ever saw any actual service. The association did, however, provide the genesis of the Pill Sea Fencibles which went on to be formed in September 1803 under the command of Captain Thomas Sotheby RN.

As late as August 1801 the Mayor of Bristol wrote to Lord Hobart, the then Secretary of War, stating that the batteries erected in 1798 were still not manned by the necessary number of men, and that the 30 or so needed by each battery could easily be provided by the Pill Volunteers.

In reply Hobart pointed out that "the services of the Pilots, Watermen etc. may certainly if properly directed, be rendered extremely useful, but there are no regular establishments except the Sea Fencibles, or the Volunteer Corps extending their services throughout the district, in which they could be classed in order to afford them the encouragement which they seem to expect. Their habits of life may render them unwilling to engage for any service in which there is a probability, however remote, of their being called to any distance from the coast".

At home, the views of the new Prime Minister were also reflecting the country's war-weariness and on 1 October 1801 an armistice with France came into effect. This was a recognition of the stalemate which existed in Europe. Britain was supreme at sea and France was supreme on land, and both countries needed a breathing space to recover from the devastation of years of war. The Armistice was followed on 28 March 1802 with a definite Treaty of Peace being signed at Amiens, by which Britain was to give back all her colonial conquests except Ceylon and Trinidad, while France was to keep most of hers but was to withdraw from Rome, Naples and Egypt. It was also agreed that Malta, which was now in British hands, should be returned to the Knights of St John.

Almost immediately the Impress Service throughout the country was disbanded, with Bristol's Captain Hawker being transferred to Portsmouth, while the gun batteries at Portishead Point and Avonmouth were also dismantled, the barracks, magazines, guns and equipment being handed over in trust by the Barracks Department to the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol on 14 June 1802. France nor England, however, regarded the Peace of Amiens as conclusive and it only lasted 13 months. From the start French troops were active in Italy, Switzerland and the West Indies, and French ports remained closed to British goods. Britain, on the other hand, decided not to evacuate Malta and not surprisingly the conflict between Britain and France was resumed on 18 May 1803, the resulting Napoleonic War lasting another twelve years.

### **NAPOLEONIC WAR - 1803 to 1815**

On 27 March 1802 Britain, France, Spain, and Holland had signed the Treaty of Amiens which ended the French Revolutionary War, a conflict which had been rumbling on since February 1793. However, in August 1802 Napoleon Bonaparte was appointed Consul for life, and he refused to remove wartime



trade restrictions placed on British commerce with continental Europe leaving a major source of contention between the two nations unresolved. Consequently, the peace was an uneasy one giving both sides little more than a well needed breathing space before the Napoleonic Wars began on 18 May 1803 when Britain declared war on France. That conflict, which Spain joined on the French side in December 1804, subsequently dragged on until 20 November 1815.

Once hostilities commenced many of the country's defensive arrangements introduced during the French Revolutionary War were immediately put back into place, with some soon being strengthened. Locally, in July 1803 the Severn Military District was re-established under the command of Lieutenant-General His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland who was based in Bristol, where Captain Thomas Sotheby RN of Clifton Hill was then the Senior Post Captain.

The measures affecting the Royal Navy in the Bristol area included the re-commissioning of the Admiralty prison at Stapleton to the north of the city and the gun batteries at Portishead and Avonmouth that protected the port of Bristol. The Impress Service was also reopened in the city in order to boost recruitment for the Navy, while the Sea Fencible organization charged with protecting the coast was finally extended to the area around the River Severn.

### **The Impress Service in Bristol**

For centuries the Royal Navy had problems finding enough men to crew the ships of the fleet, especially during times of war. By the beginning of the nineteenth century there existed three methods of recruiting, these being voluntary service, the use of quota acts, and impressment. The situation was particularly acute between 1793 and 1812 when the war at sea saw the Royal Navy enlarged from 135 to 584 ships, and its personnel expanded from 36,000 to 114,000 seamen.

Following the breakdown of the Peace of Amiens and the recommencement of hostilities, an attempt was made to increase the number of volunteers joining the Royal Navy. Consequently, on 18 May 1803, it had been officially announced in the 'London Gazette' that the bounty would be increased to £5 for fit Able Seamen volunteers, aged between 20 and 50, signing on between the 18 May and 30 June 1803, following the declaration of war; similarly a bounty of £2 10s was payable to Ordinary Seamen aged 20 to 35; and Landsmen due £1 10s. However, the old difficulty of actually retaining the recruits remained, as a report written that year noted that since 1793 more than 42,000 sailors had deserted from Royal Navy ships.

Another problem was that there was no concept of 'joining the navy' as a means of providing continuous employment, as seamen remained attached to a ship only for the duration of its commission. Although attempts were made to encourage them to remain in the service, they were free to leave to seek alternative employment once the ship had been paid off. Officers, however, were able to pursue a fixed career path in the Royal Navy, and at that time

many of them began their sailing service at the age of 11 to 13, although some were entered on ships books when even younger.

By the late eighteenth century impressment, the long standing authority from the state for conscription for naval service, had become an important means of obtaining seamen, and it has been calculated that of the 450,000 who served in the Royal Navy between 1740 and 1815, some 40 per cent had been pressed.

The first Act of Parliament legalising impressment had been passed back in 1563, and it went on to be renewed many times until 1631. In addition, the Vagabonds Act 1597 had permitted men of disrepute to be drafted into service in the fleet, while the Recruiting Act 1703 reaffirmed that such able-bodied men could be pressed into the navy. However, it also limited the impressment of men under 18 years of age to those who were not apprenticed, while a further Act in 1740 raised the maximum age from 45 to 55, and exempted foreigners.

Apart from the few exceptions, the power of the Impress Service to conscript was limited by law to seafarers, including merchant seamen, longshoremen and fishermen, and consequently the press gangs patrolling in or near Britain's sea ports would attempt to round up men aged between 15 and 55 with seafaring or river-boat experience. In reality there is no basis to the widespread impression that civilians without any seafaring background were randomly seized from home or workplace by press gangs, or that the latter were employed inland far away from coastal ports. Nevertheless, although 'landsmen' with no maritime experience were legally exempt from impressment, during wartime that distinction tended to be ignored unless the person seized was an apprentice or defined as a 'gentleman'.

Regulating Captains, assisted by one or more Lieutenants and a surgeon, were placed in charge of the Impress Service for their district and, as their name implies, 'regulated' the flow of recruits for the Navy, not only pressed men and deserters who had been apprehended by the press gang, but also volunteers. Pressed men would initially be taken to the local Impress Service headquarters, known as the rendezvous, where they were placed in a lockup to await examination by the Regulating Captain and his surgeon who decided whether they were fit to serve, and who quickly became adept in detecting shamming. If the recruits were deemed "stout men, fit for His Majesty's service", they would be rated according to their status and sea experience before being transferred to a local impress service tender, which in the case of Bristol was normally moored at Pill, or in King Road off Portishead Point

Press gangs could also use their cutters to patrol rivers and harbours, and to go far enough out to sea to collect sailors before they could escape ashore from merchantmen about pay off and release its crew. One advantage of that method was that these men could be delivered straight aboard their tender for processing while men pressed inland had to be marched or transported handcuffed by wagon.

Even before hostilities with France were resumed in 1803 the Impress Service had already re-opened a number of headquarters, each under a Captain and one or more Lieutenants, "in those parts of the UK where seamen chiefly resort." In Bristol men rounded up by the press gang would initially be taken to the rendezvous at the Royal Oak in Princes Street, and if considered suitable would be taken down to the mouth of the River Avon to be embarked on the impress tender. Once on board they were guarded in prison like conditions by the crew and a detachment of marines before the tender eventually transported them to Plymouth, where they were assigned to a ship in the fleet.

As war clouds gathered again the man appointed Regulating Captain at Bristol was Captain George Barker RN [Appendix 2 No.1], who began local impressment on 26 March 1803. However, it appears that of the 200 men secured and detained on that first night, only 15 were subsequently retained for sea service. There was also an initial problem with holding and transporting the pressed men, as on 22 June 1803 Barker wrote to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty stating that "no tender has joined this Station but the Cleveland, which vessel sailed for Plymouth the 2nd June and is not returned. I have therefore been put to great difficulty in securing the men that have been raised in her absence, and some good seamen may now be procured, provided I had the means of sending them away."

The Cleveland had in fact been a vessel hired by the Admiralty on 16 April 1803 and was allocated to the Impress Service in Swansea. A number of other vessels were also hired from civilian operators to act tenders, each of which were under the command of a Lieutenant and capable of carrying four deck mounted guns. One such was the Amy, hired on 13 April 1803, and which in May moored in the King Road. She was returned to her owners on 12 November 1804, by which time the United Brothers tender had arrived to operate from Pill. Hired on 6 September 1803 it had the misfortune of being captured by a 12 gun French privateer following a spirited fight off the Lizard on 6 January 1807. She was replaced by the Ann, which was hired on 21 March 1807, and remained in use by the local Impress Service until September 1813 when she sailed for Plymouth, prior to being returned to her owners.

Meanwhile, an improvement in the holding capability of the local Impress Service had arrived in the shape of the 175 ton armed ship HMS Enchantress, 4 guns, which had originally been built as a private yacht for Lord Ribbelsdale. Purchased by the Admiralty for £3363 in 1804, on 4 January 1806 she finally completed fitting at Plymouth Dockyard, prior to being sent as a store ship for attachment to the Impress Service based in Bristol. On 19 June 1807 Lieutenant James Pasley [Appendix 2 No.2] was appointed commander, and by July the Enchantress was already holding pressed men at her semi-permanent moorings at Pill.

In May 1813 she returned to Plymouth where, on 28th Lieutenant Pasley relinquished command. In Plymouth dockyard the Enchantress was then fitted as a receiving ship, work which was completed the following month. Meanwhile, on 3 May Captain Man Dobson [Appendix 2 No.3] had written

from his Bristol headquarters to Vice Admiral of the White William Domitt stating that that; “there is an officer here on the Impress Service, Lieutenant Joshua Latimer Rowe [Appendix 2 No.4], who I find diligent and active. He commanded a gun-brig in the North Sea, and was obliged to leave her in consequence of ill health. Was he appointed to the command of the Enchantress, I should expect from his local knowledge and exertions that he would when the convoys arrive &c, succeed in raising men with the ships, and likewise keep good order on board her.”

The request was subsequently granted and Lieutenant Rowe, who had been the Senior Lieutenant on the Impress Service in Bristol when Dobson arrived, was appointed commander of the Enchantress following her return to Pill. Then, between September and 31 December 1813, she was temporarily moored in the mouth of the River Avon, but recruitment continued to fall. That caused the Admiralty to become concerned that the Enchantress was costing about £3000 per annum, as to sail her and guard the pressed men required some 35 men. Of these 15 were Royal Marines housed on board as guards, and on 11 August 1814 the detachment comprised a sergeant, a corporal, a drummer, and 12 privates, all of which had been “invalidated for harbour duty”.

Captain Barker remained as head of the Impress Service in Bristol through until 18 July 1810 when he was retired, as by then local recruiting was reported to have been “seriously faulty”. His replacement was Captain John Philips [Appendic 2 No.5], whose performance was only slightly better, and he served as the local Regulating Officer until his premature death at Bristol on 18 March 1813 at the age of 48. He was succeeded by Captain Man Dobson who continued to send out his press gangs until, on 15 March 1815, the Admiralty ordered him to cease the impressment of seaman and the entering of men for His Majesty’s Service in Bristol, along with the activities of HMS Enchantress at Pill. With regard to recruitment, during the Napoleonic Wars the Impress Service in Bristol had supplied the Royal Navy with about 65 men per month between May 1803 and January 1805, but this had dropped to 27 in 1811 and 20 the following year.

After the Napoleonic Wars had ended impressment passed into history, although an Act was passed in 1835 reaffirming the power to impress. Nevertheless, it was never again used in Britain as a means of conscription, as by the time of the Crimean War in 1853 a new system of fixed-term engagements had given the Royal Navy a sufficient number of volunteer recruits to meet its manpower needs.

### **Severn District Sea Fencibles**

The Sea Fencible organization, the brainchild of Captain Home Riggs Popham RN who in 1793 had commanded a small force of longshoremen and naval volunteers in Flanders, was developed to defend the shores of the country during the French Revolutionary War. It was made up of seafaring men residing along the East, South and Western Coasts of England who voluntarily enrolled themselves to serve in time of invasion.

The recruits were to be trained to use pikes, to man the fixed batteries along the coast, and in the operation of any gun-boats that might be available. Each unit was commanded by a Captain RN on half pay, normally a man not required for active service with the fleet due to age or partial disability from past wounds. He was also assisted by between three and six Lieutenants according to the number of Fencibles enrolled in the District. Royal approval for the official formation of the corps came on 13 March 1798, after which units were soon operating from Whitby, south to the coasts of Devon and Cornwall and across to Swansea, although Bristol and the River Severn was not included.

Following the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars the Sea Fencible organization was soon re-activated. As a result, by mid-July 1803 it had been re-established along the East Coast between Emsworth, near Portsmouth, and north to St Abbs Head in Scotland, while 48 Port Captains and Commanders, together with an appropriate number of Lieutenants, had been appointed.

Then, on 15 August 1803, Lord Hobart sent a dispatch to the Earl of Berkeley, the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire and the City and County of Bristol, stating that the Sea Fencible organization was to be extended to other parts of the country. A "Plan of a Voluntary Naval Armament, for the Protection of the Coast", containing a number of proposals, was also included within the correspondence. It recommended that the Lord Lieutenants of the maritime counties co-operate with the Admiralty in obtaining the enrolment as Sea Fencibles of seamen in their areas who were unsuitable for service in the Royal Navy.

It was also hoped that the major ports would equip, at their own expense, armed vessels or hulks to be used for defensive purposes and manned by Sea Fencibles. Colliers and coasting vessels were considered the most suitable for conversion to gun boats, and it was hoped that the owners of these would fit them out as such, at an estimated cost of under £54. The boats were to be provided "with slides between decks, and loop-holes in the combings of their hatchways, for close quarters". Two guns were to be carried forward and two aft to permit firing on either side as well as fore and aft, and rings and eyebolts for these were also to be fitted. In addition, if small vessels were employed as gun boats it was considered advisable to provide them with large oars to permit operation during calm weather.

When these conversions were completed the necessary guns and ammunition would be provided free of charge by the Government, which could also supply suitable vessels if the port was unable to fit out their own gun boats, or if more men than could be put to work were raised. When arriving at or sailing from port such vessels were subject to inspection by the commander of the local Sea Fencibles, and at all times they were to obey signals and directions from Royal Navy ships or shore signal stations.

Finally, when detained they were entitled to demurrage, according to their tonnage, at the same rate as "common transports". A reply was sent to Lord

Hobart following a special meeting of the Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol on 24 August 1803, in which it was stated that 252 able men had already volunteered at Pill, but still had no commander appointed. There were no large vessels available in the Port of Bristol to act as gun boats, but if the Government would provide them, together with the necessary officers, the Pill volunteers would operate the guns. Neither were there any colliers belonging to the port, but there were a few coasting vessels which the magistrates would use their influence to get converted. The Port's pilot boats would also be inspected and those found suitable to carry a single gun in the bow would be fitted with the necessary ring and eye bolts, and supplied with large oars.

At this time the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty made it clear that all those who volunteered as Sea Fencibles would not be forced to leave their own locality, unless there was the threat of an invasion, and that they were only required to muster and exercise with pikes and cannon once a week, on a day chosen so as to interfere least with their occupations. The men were permitted to leave the district when fishing or carrying goods to market, and most importantly provided with a certificate which exempted them from the unwelcome attentions of the Impress Service and their press gangs.

Sea Fencible units were allowed to choose their own Petty Officers, one to every 25 men, subject to approval by their Captain, and if called upon for war service were to be entitled to a "shilling a day plus provisions, or another shilling in lieu of provisions". Under such circumstances no seaman would be exempt from the impress unless enrolled as a Sea Fencible. With such favourable conditions on offer it did not take long for a local organization to become established, and on 13 September 1803, the Severn District Sea Fencibles, with its headquarters at Bristol, was formed under the command of Captain Thomas Sotheby [Appendix 2 No.6], who had local connections. Its area covered the coast between Bristol and Gloucester, and down from Gloucester to Beachley. The Senior Post Captain of every District of Sea Fencibles also had command of all the armed boats comprising the armed flotilla for the Fencibles of the District, as well as regulating all the Signal Posts within his District, at each of which was to be stationed a Lieutenant.

The Severn District initially contained eleven units of Sea Fencibles, divided into three groups. The first covered the Port of Bristol; the second the eastern side of the River Severn up to Gloucester and down the western bank to Westbury on Severn; and the third down from Westbury to Beachley, and up the Gloucestershire side of the River Wye. Those located at Bristol and Pill, were under the personal command of Captain Sotheby; those at Oldbury, Berkeley, Frampton, Minsterworth, and Gloucester under Captain George Blake; while the Newnham, Lydney, Tidenham, and Brockweir units were commanded by Captain George Christopher Pulling.

Local recruiting started almost immediately with advertisements appearing in 'Felix Farley's Bristol Journal' and the 'Gloucester Journal'. They requested all seafaring persons such as pilots, fishermen, trowmen, and masters and owners of barges, as well as those in protected occupations in the Customs, Excise, or Post Office to assemble at the Guildhall in Bristol on 19 September,

or at the Tolsey in Gloucester on the 26th to be enrolled. In addition, Captains Blake and Pulling announced their intentions of visiting various parishes within their areas to enroll further volunteers. By the end of October this had been completed, with over 700 men having come forward and many offers made of vessels and boats to be put at the disposal of the Government. A notice also appeared in the 'Hereford Journal' ordering all volunteers residing between Chepstow and the mouth of the River Severn to rendezvous under Captains Richard and George Jones at Swansea, headquarters of the adjoining formation on the Glamorganshire side of the Bristol Channel.

Captain Sotheby was to receive £1 15s per day, paid on a on a monthly basis, Captains Blake and Pulling, the Junior Post Captains, £1 10s, and the Lieutenants, which numbered six by January 1805, 8s 6d each, there was, however, no allowance for lodging, coal or candles. The Petty Officers were paid 2s 6d for each day upon which they assembled and Ordinary Seamen 1s.

Regarding uniforms, the Sea Fencibles looked very much like the Royal Navy sailors of their day, while the officers was similar in all respects to that of a serving naval officer. The men normally wore a tarred sennet hat bearing the painted badge of the corps, a short double breasted jacket, a wool jumper with blue and white horizontal stripes, a pair of white duck trousers and a strong pair of buckled leather shoes. Around the waist they wore a broad leather belt with brass buckle from which was suspended the cutlass frog and scabbard. It was in order to assist the Ordinary Seaman that a subscription was opened in Bristol on 28 September, to "defray the expenses of clothing etc. of the Sea Fencibles, enrolled in this City and its neighbourhood". This ran until the end of October, but by that time only £234 3s had been donated.

October also saw the units assemble for the first time, Berkeley with 32 men, Tidenham with 38, and Gloucester with 72 on the 2nd; Frampton 47, Lydney 32, and Newnham 36 on the 9th; Pill, the largest unit with 234 men, and Brockweir with 72 on the 10th; followed by Bristol 137 on the 16th; and finally Minsterworth 26 and Oldbury 54, on the 31st. A meeting of those who had subscribed towards the clothing of the Bristol and Pill Sea Fencibles was held at the Council House, Bristol, on 10 November at which it was resolved that a committee be appointed to solicit further subscriptions from their fellow citizens. This committee subsequently felt "it a duty incumbent upon them to state, that the number of seafaring men who have enrolled themselves in this most valuable corps, in Bristol and Pill exceeds 500. That they are making rapid progress in the exercise of the Pike and Great Guns, and from their habit of life are fully qualified in every exertion on the water, to which the perilous circumstances of the times may call them. That the NCOs appointed from among the pilots and others have already equipped themselves with side arms and handsome naval uniforms; and that nothing is wanting to the perfect ordering and discipline of these divisions of the corps, but uniforms for the privates, by much the greater part of whom are, from their situation in life, totally unable to provide such clothing for themselves."

On 10 December 1803 'Felix Farley's Bristol Journal', reported that "the colours of this truly valuable corps (which we are informed, were the liberal gift of Richard Bryant Esq.) were presented to them last week, on which occasion, a very animated address was delivered to them by Sir Abraham Elton". Afterwards, with their commander at their head they "went through their evolutions with great dexterity", which greatly impressed Lieutenant General Tarlton, the commander of the Severn Military District and a number of distinguished officers who were present. However, the public subscription for clothing for the Sea Fencibles was still not going too well and by the end of the month only £646 19s had been collected. Despite subsequent donations of 100 guineas from the Corporation of Bristol, and 50 guineas from the Society of Merchant Venturers, by 18 January 1804, the total stood at only £809 14s, far short of the sum required.

Elsewhere in the District, on 3 July 1804, Berkeley and Oldbury combined to form a single unit based at Berkeley, with Tewkesbury taking Oldbury's place within Captain Blake's area on 6 January 1805. Only one other change took place within the District, and that involved the Lydney unit which disbanded in 1806, its final assembly of eight men taking place on 14 December of that year.

Captain Thomas Sotheby remained as commander of the Severn District Sea Fencibles, as well as the officer commanding the Bristol and Pill units, only until 8 December 1805 when, following his promotion to Rear Admiral, he was replaced for a short time by Captain William Albany Otway [Appendix 2 No.7] who, on 25 February 1806, handed over to Captain George Barker who had headed the Impress Service in Bristol since the spring of 1803.

On 20 September 1807 he made a return of the Sea Fencibles as they were then organized which he had forwarded to the Admiralty. This reveals that the total membership of the Severn District comprised some 641 men, made up of 90 from Bristol; 250 from Pill; 57 from Gloucester; 50 from Berkeley; 24 from Frampton on Severn; 17 from Minsterworth; 26 from Tewkesbury; 32 from Tibenham; 63 from Brockweir; and 32 from Newnham on Severn.

Barker was to remain as commander of both the local Impress Service and the Sea Fencibles until the latter, which by then numbered some 20,000 throughout Britain, were disbanded on 20 February 1810, by which time the threat of a French invasion had finally passed.

### **Fixed Gun Batteries protecting the Port of Bristol**

On 29 March 1804 the local Sea Fencibles had been ordered to hold themselves ready for immediate service, and if called out one of their most important tasks would have been to help man the 'Great Guns' in Port of Bristol's fixed defences, which then comprised the two batteries situated near the mouth of the River Avon. Originally constructed in 1798, each was normally garrisoned only by an NCO and four men from the Invalid Artillery, and in May 1806 Lieutenant-Colonel Kestermann of the Royal Engineers described Avonmouth (King Road) and Portishead batteries:-



"King Road Battery: This Battery which contains 4 French 36 pounders on traversing platforms is built upon a salt marsh and about 240 ft. in the rear of this upon a piece of ground about 160ft. x 140ft. inclined by a ditch, is built the Barracks Guard House. No rent has been as yet paid for this land which I understand is granted by Lord de Clifford to build the Battery and Guard House upon. The Barrack or Guard House is brick nogged and weather boarded and consists of a room for an NCO and Barracks for 12 men. A store room adjoins it and is under the same roof. There are 2 moveable wooden magazines, an Arm rack shed, a furnace for heating shot with a moveable cover over the Bellows, an old shed to hold coals, and a privy built of wood".

"Portishead Battery: This Battery contains 4 French 36 pounders on traversing platforms and is built upon a neck of land which the Corporation of Bristol owns. They have not given up the right to it to the Ordnance but have permitted rent free the Battery and Barracks to be built upon it. Beside this battery, there is an arched magazine and a Barrack built of masonry comprising one Room for an officer and 45 men with kitchen under the same roof. There is an Arm Rack Shed, a furnace for heating shot with a moveable wooden cover over the Bellows, and 2 old shed where coals and tools are kept and a privy built of wood".

In addition, in order to assist the gunners by giving them advanced warning of the approach of the enemy, in 1804 a line of signal posts had been constructed. Each of these was equipped with a flagstaff and were situated on Dundry Tower, at Hobbs Bill above the Portishead Battery, on Kingsweston Down, and at the Snuff Mill on Clifton Rocks above the Avon Gorge.

In the War Office Statement of Lands and Buildings compiled on 30 October 1811 the land on which the Portishead battery was constructed was said to belong to the Corporation of Bristol who granted it to the Board of Ordnance on payment of a peppercorn annually. For the King Road battery a yearly rent of £2 2s was paid by the Board of Ordnance to Lord de Clifford for the ground the battery and guard house stood upon. Although the Napoleonic Wars ended in November 1815, the batteries at Portishead and Avonmouth remained garrisoned until 1835, at which time they were finally disarmed.

### **A Floating Gun Battery**

In order to supplement the fixed defences of the Port of Bristol when the threat of a French invasion seemed strongest, it was decided that a gunboat was also to be stationed temporarily near the mouth of the River Avon. HMS Magnanime, a 1370 ton 64 gun 3rd Rate built at Deptford back in 1780, was selected for the task, as in February 1795 she had been reduced to a 5th Rate vessel armed with six 42 pounder carronades, twenty-six 24 pounder and twelve 12 pounder cannons.

Under the command of Captain John Broughton [8], she set sail from Plymouth on 3 November 1803 and moored off Flat Holm from 7 until 22 November, before finally commencing duty as a floating battery in the King

Road the following day. The Magnanime remained in position until 23 June 1804 when she finally sailed for the Isle of Wight (see also Appendix 1), and during her time in the King Road had employed some seven French prisoners of war from Stapleton Prison about the mizzen rigging.

### **The Admiralty Prison at Stapleton**

After twelve years of uneasy peace England was again facing war, for in 1775 her American colonies had revolted against her, demanding their independence. The revolutionaries were aided in their struggle by England's old adversaries - France, Holland and Spain. Initially those naval prisoners from enemy nations that were landed on the quayside in Bristol were housed in a small prison at Redcliffe Backs, but by the autumn of 1779 a new Admiralty prison had been built at Stapleton at a cost of £3000, this facility being leased from Nehemiah Bartley a maltster of Redcross Street, Bristol, for £75 per annum. However, it stood empty until 1780 when the 150 prisoners at Redcliffe Backs were finally transferred to Stapleton, and these were quickly followed by the arrival of some 900 Spaniards and 300 Dutchmen.

By 1782 the prison held a total of 1737 enemy seamen, but after peace returned in 1783 the prison stood empty before being bought by the Admiralty in 1786 for £1029. However, the building remained unused until 1793 when war broke out again, the first arrivals being 1000 Frenchmen transferred from Forton near Portsmouth. These were later joined by a large group of Spanish, and in 1813 by 400 Americans. For the next 21 years, broken only by the uneasy 14 month truce following the Treaty of Amiens, the Stapleton prisoners remained unhappy, overcrowded and underfed.

After the Peace of Amiens, all the naval prisoners at Stapleton had to be returned to France, the last 417 sailing from Pill en-route for Brittany on May 11th 1802 on board the 'Alfred', a 390 ton ship belonging to the port of Lancaster. The Admiralty, however, grumbled at the delay, saying that this was the last prison in England to be cleared.

At the start of the Napoleonic Wars in 1803 the prison was brought back into service to house captured French, and later Spanish and American seamen. In 1804 a third block was added to the east of the two that had originally been erected on the site, and today this is the only surviving prison block.

Throughout the conflict the Stapleton Prison was the responsibility the Navy Board of the Commissioners of Sick, Wounded and Prisoners, and to oversee it Royal Navy Captains were appointed as full-time Agents for Prisoners of War, who also had a steward allocated to assist them. The first agent, who held the situation until 1805, was Captain Joseph Baker [Appendix 2 No.9] who, some years before, had served on the survey ship HMS Discovery off the north-west coast of America under conditions of great hardship.

Captain Edmund Crawley [Appendix 2 No.10], an excellent administrator, was next appointed. When in command of the Valiant, 72 guns, off San Domingo

he had driven ashore a French frigate which had in convoy several American ships sailing to the relief of Cap Francois.

On his promotion to Rear-Admiral in October 1809 he was replaced by Captain Andrew Fitzherbert Evans [Appendix 2 No.11], a kindly and practical Post Captain. When in command of the frigate *Aeolus* Captain Evans had also taken part in the blockade of Cap Francois, and went on to command the *Vanguard*, 74 guns. After acting as the agent for Prisoner's of War at Stapleton from November 1808 until April 1811, Captain Evans was appointed a Rear-Admiral on the Bermuda Station.

As his replacement Captain Micajah Malbon [Appendix 2 No.12], already a sick man, arrived in 1811, but died at Stapleton on 12 June 1813. So it was that the last agent before the war ended was Captain James Stevenson [Appendix 2 No.13], who after the battle of Aboukir had commanded a gunboat on the Nile. His appointment was announced in early July 1813, and his last duty involved the final repatriation of the prisoners to France.

The Treaty of Paris, signed on 30 May 1814, initiated the release of both the healthy and sick prisoners at Stapleton, at which time there were some 2000 men incarcerated, of whom 500 were American. It was arranged that the inmates would leave in order of capture, with those imprisoned for ten to eleven years going first. The last 600 healthy men were marched in two divisions, via Hanham and Keynsham, to Portsmouth as the Transport Department had objected to the heavy dock dues at Pill. However, 392 invalids did sail from Hung Road, but there still ten in the prison who were too ill to travel. A month later seven of these had been discharged, while in August it was reported that the whole establishment was "quite clear of its late inhabitants."

It appears that the last two of the three remaining patients had been moved to Bristol Royal Infirmary, while the last of all, Jean Jacques Declerc, had been taken to the nearby Fishponds Poorhouse. Consequently, it was advertised that "sundry articles of household furniture, prison and hospital stores, were to be disposed of by an auction sale starting on 5 September 1814, and shortly after the buildings were being used as an ordnance store under the Army's Barracks Department.

In 1832 part of the old prison was rented by the Incorporation of the Poor at Bristol to relieve the extreme overcrowding at St Peter's Hospital, and in 1837 the whole prison was bought outright to shelter 1100 paupers. Most of the old buildings were demolished between 1861 and 1865 and new ones erected for a workhouse, leaving only the No.3 Prison Block still standing. Today this bears a plaque carrying the date 1837, the year in which it was acquired and converted by the Incorporation of the Poor, while the marble plaque on its northern gable end was placed there in 1933 to commemorate the French soldiers incarcerated and buried there.

Between the block and part of the high boundary wall the original 1779 guardhouse also survives, as do the military style houses still standing next

door in what is now Manor Road in Fishponds, a new parish created out of Stapleton in 1869. These houses are number 172, originally built to accommodate the agent, and number 184, the old officer's mess.

Finally in 1918 the workhouse, which was still under the control of the Board of Guardians, was re-named the Stapleton Institution, and in 1948 it became Stapleton Hospital under the local Regional Hospital Board. It was renamed Manor Park Hospital in 1956 and Blackberry Hill Hospital in 1992 when it merged with Glenside Hospital next door. However, by the spring of 2006 the old Manor Park section had been almost completely run-down, with most of the buildings being put up for sale by the North Bristol NHS Trust.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Extracts from the Captain's and Masters's logs of HMS Magnanime**

November 1803

03/11/1803 - At moorings at Stonehouse Pool, Plymouth.  
04/11/1803 - At Rame Head.  
05/11/1803 - Near Lundy Island.  
06/11/1803 - Off Hartland Point.  
07/11/1803 - Moored off Flat Holm at 1 pm.  
22/11/1803 - Sailed for Kingroad.  
23/11/1803 - Moored in Kingroad (until 22/06/1804)  
25/11/1803 - Discharged 30 Sups. into the 'Renown' Revenue Cutter.  
27/11/1803 - Received 6 men from HM hired tender 'Amy'.  
29/11/1803 - Exercised the men at the Great Guns.  
30/11/1803 - Exercised the carronades.

December 1803

08/12/1803 - Received 2 men from the rendezvous.  
11/12/1803 - Mustered ships company and read Articles of War.  
13/12/1803 - Received 3 men from the rendezvous.  
14/12/1803 - Received 4 men from the rendezvous.  
18/12/1803 - Received 3 men from the rendezvous.  
19/12/1803 - Received 4 men from the rendezvous.  
22/12/1803 - Received 6 men from the rendezvous.

January 1804

01/01/1804 - Received one man from the rendezvous.  
03/01/1804 - Sent 51 men on board the 'Resolution' cutter to Plymouth: Received 4 men from the rendezvous.  
07/01/1804 - Received 4 men from the rendezvous.  
09/01/1804 - 'United Brothers' tender arrived.  
12/01/1804 - 'Amy' tender arrived from Bridgwater.  
13/01/1804 - Sent 11 men on board the 'United Brothers' tender: One lost over board from the Head Hammer clinch.  
19/01/1804 - Fired 21 guns in commemoration of His Majesty's birthday: Exercised the Great Guns.  
26/01/1804 - Punished William Yates and George Dawson by running the gauntlet for theft.  
27/01/1804 - Punished Thomas Conner with 24 lashes for drunkenness and uncleanness.

February 1804

03/02/1804 - Punished William Fletcher with 24 lashes for drunkenness and neglect of duty, and James Curry with 30 lashes for drunkenness, neglect of duty and insolence.  
23/02/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns and small arms.  
29/02/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns and small arms.

#### March 1804

09/03/1804 - Received 7 French prisoners from Stapleton Prison.  
12/03/1804 - William Bateman alias Sheppard deserted.  
14/03/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns and small arms; Sent Lieutenant Hodgskins to hospital.  
17/03/1804 - Pressed 2 men.  
25/03/1804 - Pressed 4 men.  
27/03/1804 - 'United Brothers' tender sailed for Plymouth with men employed unstowing the booms.

#### April 1804

01/04/1804 - The 'Swift' arrived.  
04/04/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns: The 'Racer' Revenue Cutter came in from westward with a vessel she had taken with spirits.  
06/04/1804 - The 'Earl Spencer' tender cutter arrived from Cork; French prisoners employed about the mizzen rigging.  
09/04/1804 - HM Hired Cutter 'Earl Spencer' sailed.  
11/04/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns.  
12/04/1804 - Supplied the 'Amy' tender with 50 beds.  
18/04/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns.  
20/04/1804 - Exercised small arms.  
22/04/1804 - The 'Racer' Revenue Cutter arrived here with a smuggling cutter as prize.  
24/04/1804 - The 'United Brothers' tender arrived.

#### May 1804

08/05/1804 - The 'Dolphin' Revenue Cutter arrived here with an officer and 38 men from Plymouth to take round the 'Albion' sloop.  
09/05/1804 - Sent the launch with the officer and men to Bristol.  
17/05/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns and small arms.  
30/05/1804 - Fired salute in commemoration of King Charles.  
31/05/1804 - Exercised the Great Guns.

#### June 1804

05/06/1804 - Fired a salute of 21 guns in commemoration of the King's birthday.  
06/06/1804 - The 'United Brothers' tender came down and anchored.  
14/06/1804 - The 'Cleveland' tender arrived here.  
16/06/1804 - The 'Cleveland' tender sailed.  
17/06/1804 - HM Ship 'Nimrod' arrived here.  
18/06/1804 - The 'Nimrod' sailed.  
20/06/1806 - HM Cutter 'Viper' arrived.  
22/06/1804 - Edward Walsh, Thomas NcCann and Henry Bryant deserted.  
23/06/1804 - At 12.30 unmoored and sailed to St Ives.  
24/06/1804 - Off Start Point.  
25/06/1804 - Off Bolt Head.  
26/06/1804 - Off Sidmouth.  
27/06/1804 - Off St Alban's Head.  
28/06/1804 - Moored off Needles Lights.  
29/06/1804 - Into St Helen's, Isle of Wight.

July 1804

01/07/1804 - Moored at Spithead.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Biographical details of selected Royal Navy officers**

#### **(1) George Barker**

George Barker, who was born at Gosport in Hampshire around 1761, was probably the son of William and Mary Barker baptized at Holy Trinity in Gosport on 18 March 1762. He entered the Royal Navy at Portsmouth on 1 June 1771 as a First Class Volunteer aboard HMS Barfleur, 98 guns. In 1777 Baker transferred to HMS Resolution, 74 guns, stationed off the coast of Portugal and subsequently served in the Channel and West Indies as a Midshipman aboard HMS Vengeance, 74 guns, before, in 1781, passing his Lieutenant's examination. Consequently, on 19 March 1782 he was promoted to a Lieutenancy in HMS Dromedary, 30 guns, then serving in the Downs.

After an interval of seven years, from June 1790 Barker served on the Newfoundland, Mediterranean, West India, and Home Stations in HMS Pegasus, 28 guns; HMS Saint Albans, 64 guns; and HMS Pompée, 74 guns. Then, on 19 December 1796, he was promoted to the rank of Commander, on which date he was appointed commander and commanding officer of HMS Incendiary, 14 guns, in which vessel he assisted in the destruction of the French store-ship Suffrein off Ushant on 8 January 1797. On 8 June 1799 he was promoted to Captain and confirmed in command of HMS Barfleur, 98 guns, in the Mediterranean, before transferring to HMS Queen Charlotte, 100 guns, which he left on 14 July of the same year.

On 21 February 1801 Barker was appointed to HMS Severn, 44 guns, on the West India Station, whence he returned in January 1803. Then, in the spring of the same year he was appointed to regulate the Impress Service at Bristol, while on 19 February 1806 he also took command of the Bristol based Severn District Sea Fencibles. He remained at the head of both services until the Sea Fencibles were disbanded on 20 February 1810. However, on 18 July of that year Barker was also replaced as head of the Impress Service in Bristol and retired on half-pay. His advancement to the rank of a superannuated Rear-Admiral took place 6 June 1825, to that of Vice-Admiral on 12 November 1840, and to Admiral on the retired list on 27 December 1847.

George Barker was twice married, his first wife being Fanny, and their daughter Albinia Maria Barker, who was born in Bristol on 13 November 1803, was baptized at St Stephen in the city on 30 December. By 1830 George Barker was living at 26 Cold Harbour in Gosport, while at St Mary in Islington on 8 January 1833, and described as "of the parish of Alverstoke, widower", he married Mary Ann Hunter, the spinster daughter of J. Hunter Esq., of Compton Terrace, Islington. Admiral George Barker was described as living at 'Springfield', Saint Helens, on the Isle of Wight, when he made his will on 28 May 1849, before finally passing away at his residence, 'Vernon House', Spring Vale, near Ryde, on 25 December 1851. There he had been living with his wife Mary (born c.1810), unmarried daughter Albinia (1803 to 1868), and five domestic staff.

#### **(2) James Pasley**

James Pasley, who was born at Poole in Dorset about 1782, entered the Royal Navy on 17 June 1794 as an Ordinary Seaman on board the sloop HMS Spitfire, 8 guns, which was attached to the force in the English Channel. There, in the following September, he joined HMS Minotaur, 74 guns, the flag-ship of Rear-Admiral John Macbride before, on 8 July 1795, transferring as an Able Seaman to the sloop HMS Rattler, 16 guns. On 14 January 1796 Pasley was appointed a Midshipman, and as such took part at the capture of the French privateer Le Pichegru, 10 guns, off Cherbourg on 6 May 1796. Serving as Masters Mate from

17 January 1797 Pasley then sailed for the West Indies Station where, in 1798, the Rattler was involved in the evacuation of the Cayemite Islands off Haiti.

On 28 September 1798 he was transferred as Acting-Lieutenant to the sloop HMS Lark, 16 guns, and while serving with her was most actively employed and contributed to the capture of a large number of armed and other vessels. A good example of his contribution took place on 14 March 1800, as Captain Loring wrote in the log:-

“Off St Jago de Cuba observed a privateer in shore, and sent the boats, under the command of Lieutenant Lane, to bring her out. The enemy had taken an advantageous position of two heights forming the entrance of the bay, where the schooner was lying, and notwithstanding the gallant attack of Lieutenant Lane and his people, the boats were repulsed and returned, he himself being shot through the heart. The service in him has lost a brave and good officer. Mr Pasley, the Junior Lieutenant, was landed with a party of men in a bay, at 10 miles distance, to march round and attack the enemy in the rear, whilst I went myself in the boats to repeat the attack in their front. On my arrival, Mr Pasley had executed his orders with such expedition and judgment, that he left me no other employment than that of being a satisfied spectator to the steady and good conduct of himself and his people. The vessel mounts two carriage guns, a great quantity of small arms, and is one of those which has so long infested the coast of Jamaica and had been destroyed.” As a result on 20 June 1800 Pasley was confirmed in his rank of Lieutenant.

Then, for a time, he was sent on temporary deployment to HMS Beaulieu, 38 guns. During that period he assisted in the boats of that ship and of the frigates HMS Dorsi and HMS Uranie, at the cutting-out of the French corvette La Chevrette, armed with 20 guns and a crew of 350 men, on the night of 21 July 1801. She was anchored under the batteries in Camaret Bay in Brittany, a position deemed almost impregnable. However, at 9.30 p.m. the boats arrived in sight of the La Chevrette, which, after hailing, opened a heavy fire of grape and musketry. Her firing was immediately followed by volleys from the shore, but the attackers continued to approach her. The Beaulieu's boats, under Lieutenant Maxwell, with Lieutenant James Pasley and Lieutenant of Marines James Sinclair, boarded on the starboard bow and quarter, while those from the other British ships went aboard on the larboard bow. A deadly conflict then took place before the attackers took command of the prize.

Soon after Pasley returned to HMS Lark in the West Indies where, on 13 September 1801, he set out with two of her boats under his orders, and each carrying 16 men, he attacked in the face of heavy fire before boarding and taking the Spanish three gun privateer-schooner Esperanza, and its crew of 45, which was anchored within the Portillo reefs off Cuba. As it was planned that the Lark was to depart for England in early July, on 19 June 1802 Pasley was transferred to HMS Trent, 36 guns, in which he continued to be deployed on the West Indies Station, and did not leave the ship until back home in England on 14 June 1803.

He then served on half-pay with the Sea Fencibles in Ireland, a period which lasted from 5 April 1804 until 22 June 1805 before, on the following day, being appointed commander of the sloop HMS Argus, 18 guns, off Cork. Finally, on 19 June 1807, Pasley took command of HMS Enchantress, 4 guns, which was to be moored at Pill near Bristol to act as store ship and tender for the local Impress Service, and he remained with her until 28 May 1813 when she arrived at Plymouth for conversion to a receiving ship.

With his sea time with the Royal Navy at an end, James Pasley left the service to pursue a career in merchant shipping, and on 22 December 1815 was listed as the Master of the Hercules, a 191 ton coppered brig, the owners of which were John Gilbert, Henry Taylor and John Bangley, merchants, with James Pasley, mariner, all of Bristol. The Hercules is known to have made voyages to Madeira, Demerara, Malta, Riga, Nevis, and also St Vincent where she was totally destroyed by fire on 15 August 1819.

Her replacement was the 256 ton coppered ship St Vincent Planter, built in Bristol in 1820, which had the same owners, and that was advertised as sailing on her maiden voyage about 10 May, bound for Barbadoes and St Vincent, and under James Pasley, Master. He undertook a similar voyage with her in January 1821, but John Gilbert & Co. were soon in

financial difficulties, and although sales which took place on 20 October 1821 and 13 June 1822 resulted in him disposing of his one third share in the St Vincent Planter, James Pasley, of the City of Bristol, Master Mariner, merchant, dealer and chapman, was declared bankrupt in August 1822, and arrangements subsequently made for the sale of his personal possessions.

He then moved to London, and on 5 September 1827 it was reported that James Pasley, of Collett Place, Commercial Road East, Lieutenant RN on half-pay and Captain in the merchants' service, had appeared in the Insolvent Debtor's Court. However, his connections with Bristol had not been broken, as between 1827 and 1831 he was listed as the Master of four ships owned by John Irving, a Bristol merchant and ship owner. The vessels involved were the 294 ton Edward Protheroe (2 June 1827); the 184 ton John (1 November 1827); the 324 ton Eliza (18 November 1829); and the 262 ton Jean Graham (24 November 1831).

Pasley became a Retired Commander on the Junior List on 26 November 1830, while on 21 September 1839 it was reported that the 230 ton brig Molson, James Pasley RN, Commander, which was then loading in St Katherine Docks in London, was to sail immediately for Tobago. Then, on 20 September 1844, the following advertisement appeared in the Shipping & Mercantile Gazette:- "For Bermuda and Honduras direct. Has the greater part of her cargo on board. To sail 21 September, the fine fast sailing English built ship East London, copper fastened and coppered, 460 tons register, O.M.; James Pasley, Commander; lying the St Katharine Docks. Has excellent accommodations for passengers."

Although on 17 February 1845 it was announced that his Royal Navy pension was to be raised from half-pay to full-pay, as he was to become a Retired Commander on the Senior List, he continued working. Consequently, on 23 September 1845 an advert in the Shipping and Mercantile Gazette announced:- "For Singapore and Manilla. To sail punctually on the 20th October, the well-known fast-sailing Barque Iron Queen, A1, 550 tons burthen; James Pasley, RN Commander, lying at the jetty, London Docks. Has very superior accommodations for passengers." However, his financial problems returned, and on 15 December 1847 a Fiat in Bankruptcy was awarded against James Pasley of 52 Cannon Street, St George's in the East, Middlesex, ship owner, and that appears to have ended his maritime career.

His private life is somewhat obscure, but his first wife was Juliana Campbell, and they are known to have had several daughters. These included Lavinia Susan who was baptized at St Mary in Shirehampton on 1 November 1812, and Juliana Maria, who was born at Stonehouse in Devon about 1814, married Thomas William Jewell, a Staff Surgeon in the Royal Navy at Stepney in 1837, and passed away in Guernsey in 1870. A third daughter was Georgiana Dwyre who was baptized in St Mary at Shirehampton on 24 December 1815, but was buried there on 3 January 1816.

In March 1851 James Pasley, who was then described as a retired commander RN, was living at 13 Shaftesbury Crescent, St Georges, Hanover Square in London, along with his wife Elizabeth, who had been born at St Gennys in Cornwall about 1813. He was probably the James Pasley who was buried at Kensington & Chelsea (West Brompton) Cemetery after passing away on 2 February 1860.

### **(3) Man Dobson**

Man Dobson, the son of Anthony Dobson (1720 to 1792) and his wife Ann Beckett (1724 to 1791), was born on 17 November 1755 and baptized at Ryton in Durham on 26 December. He entered the Royal Navy in 1778, as a midshipman on HMS Hyaena, 24 guns, in which ship he was present in Vice Admiral Byron's action with D'Estaing off Grenada on 6 July 1779.

He then transferred to HMS Conqueror, 74 guns, and was in action with M. de la Mothe Piquet's Squadron, and the batteries of Fort Royal Bay, Martinique, on 18 December 1780. In that very sharp exchange the captain of the Conqueror was killed, and Dobson wounded by a single shot. However, he continued in the ship and was present in all the actions of 1780 and 1781, which saw some hard fighting. In 1782 he served as Mate on HMS Cerberus, 32 guns,



at the relief of Gibraltar, and was made a Lieutenant on 23 September 1782 on which day he transferred to the captured 36 gun Spanish frigate HMS Leucadia, and remained with her until 10 April 1783. Dobson was later appointed to HMS Fairy, 14 guns, on which he served between 17 May 1786 and 9 May 1787, prior to transferring to HMS Bedford, his time aboard her lasting from 24 June until 30 August 1791.

Dobson was appointed back to the Bedford on 1 September 1793 and was most actively employed at the defence of Toulon, where he acted as Lieutenant Governor of Fort la Malgue. He remained with the Bedford until 26 October 1794, and the following day transferred as First Lieutenant to HMS St George, 98 guns, bearing Sir Hyde Parker's flag, in which ship he served in Admiral Hortham's two actions off Toulon, prior to being promoted to Commander on 4 November 1795. He left the ship on 8 November, and was later appointed to the sloop HMS Otter, 14 guns, then in reserve at Sheerness. On 28 June 1796 he was advanced to the rank of Post Captain, and took command of HMS Queen, 90 guns, aboard which he continued to serve as Flag Captain to Vice-Admiral Sir Hyde Parker in the West Indies until November 1800.

However, that was the last vessel Dobson was to command, and he later served in the Impress Service in Ireland. Then, when Captain John Philips the Regulating Officer of the Impress Service in Bristol died on 18 March 1813, Captain Man Dobson was appointed his successor. He continued to send out his press gangs until on 15 March 1815 when the Admiralty ordered him to cease both the impressment of seaman and the entering of men for His Majesty's Service in Bristol, and after organising the discharge of his officers and men is last recorded in post on 21 June 1815. Following a distinguished naval career, Dobson was retired on 24 August 1819, on which date he became a superannuated Rear-Admiral. However, on 5 July 1827 he was promoted to Rear-Admiral of the Red, and on 22 July 1830 Vice-Admiral of the Blue, before finally becoming an Admiral of the White on 23 November 1841.

Man Dobson had married Maria Burdett (1865 to 1847) at Saint Clement Danes in London on 12 November 1788, and following his retirement the couple resided at North Kilworth near Market Harborough in Leicestershire. It was there on 27 April 1847 that he finally passed away prior to being laid to rest in nearby St Andrew's church, where an ornate marble memorial to both husband and wife still exists on the wall of the south aisle.

#### **(4) Joshua Latimer Rowe**

Joshua Latimer Rowe was the son of Thomas Rowe, a shipwright in Plymouth Dockyard, and his wife Susanna. He was baptized on 12 January 1778 at Stoke Damerel in Devon, and at an early age joined the Royal Navy. On 12 February 1789, and enrolled as an Able Seaman aboard HMS Penelope, 32 guns, he made his will, prior to the ship sailing for the Leeward Islands the following day. He continued to serve in the Penelope until she was paid off in June 1792.

Rowe was commissioned Lieutenant on 10 January 1797, but while serving aboard HMS Diadem, 64 guns, he became involved in the mutiny that had begun at the Spithead anchorage near Portsmouth on 16 April 1797. There sailors in sixteen ships belonging to the Channel Fleet had refused to sail as a protest against the living conditions aboard Royal Navy vessels, coupled with a demand for a pay rise, better victualling, increased shore leave and compensation for sickness and injury. The mutiny also spread to Plymouth when HMS Porcupine arrived carrying the news from Spithead and the resulting mutiny in the Plymouth Channel Squadron, which lasted through until June, drew in over twenty ships and their crews anchored in Plymouth Sound and Cawsand Bay, and culminated in the subsequent trial of a number of the seamen involved.

Consequently, at Portsmouth on 14 October 1799 a Court Martial was held on board HMS Gladiator on William Moore, a seaman belonging to the Diadem. He was charged with having declared that if every man was of his mind they would drag Lieutenants Rowe and Dyer out of their cabins and murder them, and for uttering other mutinous expressions. The charges being proved, the prisoner was sentenced by the Court to receive 20 lashes on board of, and

alongside such ships as the Commander in Chief should direct, to be mulcted of his pay, and to two years solitary confinement in the Marshalsea.

During the Napoleonic War Lieutenant Rowe was appointed to command two Royal Navy vessels, the first being the 185 ton gun-brig HMS Censor, 12 guns, for which he was responsible from about 7 July 1804 through until 1809. While it was attached to the North Sea Squadron at Yarmouth he was very successful, and as early as 27 November 1804 he re-captured the Unanimity brig. That was followed on 18 September 1805 by the capture of the De Hoop, a Dutch fishing dogger, and the Neutraliteit, another Dutch fishing vessel, captured by the gun-brigs Censor and Snipe on 22 December 1805. Both gun brigs also took part in the capture of the Anna Sophia on 13 April 1806, while the Censor alone was responsible for taking as a prize the Goede Hensight, J.B. Telletsen, master, on 30 June 1806, and the Mercurius, Ary Verivalt, master, on 5 August 1806. In addition the Censor is known to have re-captured the collier Edmund & Mary.

Unfortunately by 1809 Lieutenant Rowe was suffering ill health which forced him to relinquish command of the Censor, and as a result was appointed to the Impress Service in Bristol, where he subsequently became second in command. Then, on the recommendation of Captain Man Dobson, his commanding officer, in June 1813 he took command of the 175 ton receiving ship HMS Enchantress which was moored back at Pill, having just completed a refit at Plymouth.

He married three times, firstly to Sarah Galia at Alverstoke near Portsmouth on 8 October 1799 while serving aboard HMS Diadem. His second marriage took place at Sisland near Yarmouth in Norfolk on 3 November 1806 while he was commanding the Censor, at which time his bride was Elizabeth Clarke, and the third at Saint Mary at Stoke Newington in Surrey when, on 11 May 1826, he married Elizabeth Browne. Sadly the marriage was short lived, as on 1 September 1826 Joshua Latimer Rowe was buried at St George the Martyr in Southwark aged 48.

#### **(5) John Philips**

John Philips was born about 1765 at Philipsburg Manor, New York, the youngest of the five sons of Frederick Philipse (1720 to 1785) and his wife Elizabeth Williams, the daughter of Charles Williams, a naval officer for the Port of New York and widow of Anthony Rutgers. The family possessed a huge hereditary estate around Philipsborough in lower Westchester County, New York, but due to Frederick's loyalist stance during the American Revolution, by an Act of the Legislature of the State of New York these holdings were confiscated on 22 October 1779. Consequently, upon the withdrawal of British troops from New York in 1783, Frederick and his family re-located to England where he died in St Oswald's parish in the city of Chester.

As Frederick had brought up his sons in the service of Great Britain, on 21 April 1785 John Philips was commissioned Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, and early distinguished himself in the service. He took part in thirteen different engagements, including the major action off Camperdown on 11 October 1797, in which the British North Sea Fleet under Admiral Adam Duncan defeated a Dutch fleet and captured eleven ships without losing any of their own.

One of the British ships involved was HMS Ardent, 64 guns, on which Philips was serving as First Lieutenant, and she had the misfortune to lose 41 men killed, including her Captain, and 107 wounded during her duel with the larger Dutch ship Vrijheid. Not only did the Ardent sustain higher casualties than any other ship, but by the end of the battle had ninety-eight cannonballs in her hull, while her masts were damaged to such an extent that it was impossible to sail and she had to be towed home. However, during the battle Philips had so distinguished himself that for his bravery he received Lord Duncan's personal thanks and a promotion to Commander followed on 18 October.

He was promoted to Captain on 13 November 1797, and in October 1800 his first appointment was to command HMS Helder, 28 guns, the captured Dutch Sixth Rate ship Heldin, which was then completing a re-fit at Deptford Dockyard. Success came quickly, and

on 14 February 1801 her boats took the privateer La Victoire, 10 guns, off Cape St Croix. In December 1801 Philips was appointed to command HMS Oiseau, 36 guns, the captured French frigate La Cléopâtre, with which it appears he was still serving when the French Revolutionary War ended in 1802.

During the Napoleonic War he commanded the sloop HMS Bonetta, 14 guns, a situation that lasted from July 1806 until November 1807 when she was finally laid up at Sheerness. However, this seems to have been the last vessel he was to command, as when Captain George Barker was retired as Regulating Officer of the Impress Service in Bristol on 18 July 1810, Philips was appointed to be his successor, and he continued to undertake that work until his death at Bristol on 18 March 1813 at the age of 48.

Lieutenant Joshua Latimer Rowe, then the second in command of the Impress Service in Bristol, arranged and conducted the funeral procession, which took place on 23 March, and it did him great credit. HMS Enchantress, which belonged to the Service and was moored at Pill, fired minute guns during the procession, while the Union jack was hoisted half-staff on St Paul's church in Bristol's Portland Square. There, as his body was deposited in the ground, the whole of the troops fired three volleys, while the bands played a solemn dirge between each volley.

#### **(6) Thomas Sotheby**

Thomas Sotheby was born on 15 May 1758 at Bloomsbury in London, the son of William Sotheby (1688 to 1766), Colonel of the Coldstream Guards, and his wife Elizabeth Sloane (born 1725) the daughter of William Sloane of Stoneham in Hampshire. On 24 September 1771 he entered the Royal Navy as a scholar at the Royal Naval Academy before being commissioned Lieutenant on 18 October 1778, and promoted to Commander on 5 January 1783. On that date he was appointed commanding officer of HMS Experiment, 14 guns, a position he held until 11 June 1783 when he was promoted to Captain and transferred to HMS Champion, 24 guns, a ship he continued to command until 1 October 1784.

At the commencement of the French Revolutionary War, and being of Post rank, on 26 March 1793 Sotheby took command of HMS Daphne, 20 guns, from which he transferred on 7 August 1794 into HMS Andromeda, 32 guns, which was then stationed in the North Sea. Then, on 1 June 1795, he was appointed captain and commanding officer of HMS Bombay Castle, 74 guns. She was to become part of a combined British and Neapolitan fleet which, on 13 July 1795, engaged the French Mediterranean Fleet in the Battle of the Hyères Islands, fought for control of the Ligurian Sea off the coast of southern France and north-western Italy.

Sotheby was still in command of the Bombay when, having taken a pilot on board, she entered the River Tagus in Portugal. However, while attempting to avoid the store-ship Camel that had grounded ahead of her, on 21 December 1796 HMS Bombay Castle also went aground. Although throughout the subsequent week boats removed her guns and stores, all attempts to re-float her failed, and on the 27th the Navy abandoned her as a wreck.

Between 1 April 1797 and 21 June 1797 Sotheby was captain and commanding officer of HMS Victory, 100 guns, and in March 1798 he held a similar position aboard HMS Namur, 90 guns, which he retained until November of that year. In January 1799 he was appointed to HMS Marlborough, 74 guns, but on the night of 4 November 1800 while in the company of HMS Captain, 74 guns, was cruising between the islands of Groix and Belle-Isle off the Brittany coast when she struck on the Bividaux or Bervadeux shoal.

There she hung for several hours, but by the great exertions of her officers and crew in throwing overboard some of her guns and all of her heavy stores, the ship was refloated. The Marlborough, however, had received so much damage that even after all her masts had been cut away, and the remainder of her guns thrown overboard, the amount of water she made obliged the officers and crew to leave her to her fate. Soon after she sank at her anchors, although, all those aboard were saved by HMS Captain and a Danish brig that had just joined them.

A Court Martial held on 2 January 1801 to try Captain Sotheby for the loss of HMS Marlborough subsequently reported:- "That they were of the opinion her loss was occasioned by the striking on the Bervadeux shoals, on the coast of France, which accident happened from the uncertain situation of the rocks: and Captain Sotheby's anxiety and zeal to carry his orders into execution, and being thereby so disabled as to render it impossible to save her; that no blame was imputable to Captain Sotheby, his Officers, or Ship's Company, for their conduct on that occasion; and that they afterwards did their utmost to preserve the ship and stores."

In May 1801 he was appointed to HMS Courageux, 74 guns, and he continued in that ship until April 1802, a month after the French Revolutionary War had ended. Then, during the early part of the Napoleonic Wars Captain Thomas Sotheby was in Bristol as the Senior Post Captain of the Severn District, while in addition, on 13 September 1803 the Severn District Sea Fencibles was also formed under his command. For the next two years he remained at Bristol, but on 9 November 1805 he was promoted to Rear-Admiral of the Blue, and on 8 December relinquished his local responsibilities.

In 1808 and 1809 Sotheby served in the Channel fleet off Ushant with his flag in HMS Dreadnought, 98 guns, during which time he was promoted to Rear-Admiral of the White on 28 April 1808 and Rear-Admiral of the Red on 25 October 1809. Promotion to Vice-Admiral of the Blue followed on 31 July 1810, Vice-Admiral of the White on 12 August 1812, Vice-Admiral of the Red on 4 June 1814, Admiral of the Blue on 19 July 1821, and finally Admiral of the White on 22 July 1830.

Thomas Sotheby was twice married; first in 1788 to Sarah Anstey (born 1762), the youngest daughter of Christopher Anstey of Bath, a lady who died at their home in Clifton Hill, Bristol, on 18 April 1802. His second marriage took place on 11 March 1806 at St Andrew, Clifton in Bristol, his bride being Lady Mary-Anne Bourke (1783 to 1830), fourth daughter of the Most Reverend Joseph Deane, third Earl of Mayo and Archbishop of Tuam. On 30 June 1830 Admiral Thomas Sotheby, who was then living at Brighton, made his will before passing away on 16 June 1831 at the Manor House, High Beach in Essex, aged 72, and prior to being buried at St John in Hackney, on 20 July.

### **(7) William Albany Otway**

William Albany Otway was born on 29 June 1755, the son of George Otway and his wife Dorothy, a family which had originated around the Yorkshire-Westmoreland border. He was baptized at St Martin-in-the-Fields in Westminster on 11 July of the same year, and later entered the Royal Navy. Consequently, in 1765 he was listed aboard HMS Africa, 64 guns, which saw service in the West Indies. Otway then served aboard HMS Dreadnought, 60 guns, at Jamaica prior to returning home in December 1766.

In 1770 he went out to the Mediterranean aboard HMS Niger, 32 guns, and then sailed for the East Indies in April 1772 aboard HMS Prudent, 64 guns. On 25 August 1773, and while still on the East Indies Station, he was commissioned Lieutenant on HMS Dolphin, 24 guns, by Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Harland, and that appointment was confirmed by the Admiralty on 24 October 1774.

While serving as the Second Lieutenant on the frigate HMS Lark, 32 guns, Otway was captured by American rebels when hunting in the Potomac during August 1777, but had returned to his ship by the end of the following month. During the defence of Rhode Island in August 1778 he commanded a battery on Goat's Island after his ship has been destroyed to prevent her capture by the French. Then, upon returning to England, he was appointed first Lieutenant on HMS Triumph, 74 guns, serving in the Channel fleet and later in the Leeward Islands. Otway then participated in the actions with the French fleet from 15 to 21 May 1780, and on 3 February 1781, which resulted in the capture of St Eustatius.

On 29 March 1781, and whilst still at St Eustatius, he was promoted to Commander by Admiral Sir George Rodney, and on that date was appointed to HMS Vesuvius, 8 guns. He later served with her in the Downs until 2 November, prior to the vessel being refitted and

coppered, a process which lasted from July until the following January. Then, between 2 September and 9 December 1782, he was listed as commander and commanding officer of HMS Barracouta, 14 guns, while from 2 December 1782 until 28 April 1783 Otway was with the brig-sloop HMS Kingfisher, 18 guns, during the final stages of her construction.

After commissioning Kingfisher on 1 May 1783 he commanded her for the next three years on the Mediterranean Station, prior to paying her off at Deptford on 20 October 1786. Then, on 7 March 1787, he took over the newly commissioned HMS Scorpion, 16 guns, retaining her at Portsmouth until he was posted Captain on 1 December 1787. On that day Otway was appointed captain and commanding officer of HMS Leda, 36 guns, a position he held until 30 January 1789, when he was transferred briefly to HMS Pegasus, 28 guns, on the Newfoundland Station, which he commanded until 19 March.

His next command was the re-commissioned HMS Centurion, 50 guns, to which he was posted on 19 March 1789, and was recorded on board from 22 March. He subsequently became flag-captain to Rear-Admiral Phillip Affleck at Jamaica, and Otway retained the Centurion until he came home and paid her off on 27 July 1792.

On 25 December 1792 he was appointed to HMS Boyne, 98 guns, in which he sailed under the orders of Rear-Admiral John Gell when that officer took the East India convoy out to Cape Finisterre. In the Channel during June 1793 he captured the French privateer Guidelon, 20 guns, and remained captain and commanding officer of HMS Boyne until 4 November 1793.

On 25 November Otway was initially assigned to HMS Belliqueux, 64 guns, but on 4 December was appointed command to HMS Powerful, 74 guns. After going out to Jamaica in January 1794 he returned to pay her off at Portsmouth on 22 August having lost to yellow fever scores of men, including all but two of his officers. He was then briefly in command of HMS Flora, 36 guns, at Portsmouth from 8 September until November 1795.

Meanwhile, on 25 September, Captain Otway, along with four others was appointed to be "His Majesty's Commissioner's for conducting the Transport Service, and for the Care and Custody of Prisoners of War, excepting such of the said prisoners as may either from accident or disease, become objects of surgical or medical assistance."

Residing at 41 Queen Ann Street East in Marylebone, he remained a Commissioner of the Transport Office until 1803 when he became Resident Commissioner of the Navy at Gibraltar, where he was responsible for superintending the dockyard. He served there throughout 1804, prior to coming home in 1805 to sit on the Board of Naval Inquiry, while between 8 December 1805 and 25 February 1806 he briefly commanded the Severn District Sea Fencibles based in Bristol.

From July 1806 Otway commanded HMS Glory, 98 guns, going out to Cadiz in January 1807. He was advanced to the rank of Rear-Admiral of the Blue on 2 October 1807, briefly retaining the Glory as his flagship, and saw service in the Channel in 1808. On 28 April 1808 he was appointed Rear-Admiral of the White, and on 18 June 1808 he took passage out to the River Tagus in Portugal aboard HMS Lively, 38 guns, where he flew his flag aboard HMS Ganges, 74 guns, and thereafter HMS Barfleur, 98 guns.

Otway returned home at the beginning of 1809 on account of ill health and became second in command at Portsmouth aboard HMS Gladiator, 44 guns, prior to being appointed Rear-Admiral of the Red on 31 July 1810. Shifting his flag to HMS Caesar, 80 guns, Otway was appointed second-in-command during the Walcheren Expedition of July 1809, having special responsibility for the conveyance of a division of 17,000 troops. He was left in command when the commander-in-chief returned to England on 21 August, and directed the withdrawal from Flushing in December. For a short while he also flew his flag aboard HMS Monarch, 74 guns.

During the course of 1810 he was employed as the commander-in-chief in the Thames with his flag aboard HMS Thisbe, 38 guns, but on 16 August 1810 Otway became commander-in-chief at the Leith Station with his flag in HMS Adamant, 50 guns, and was advanced to the rank of Vice-Admiral of the Blue on 1 August 1811. He continued serving at the Leith Station,

and on 14 September 1813 transferred to HMS Latona, 38 guns, prior to coming ashore for the last time in November and finally being appointed Vice-Admiral of the White on 4 June 1814.

Otway, who was regarded as modest with a dry sense of humour, married Hannah Burdon (1766 to 1816) of Hartford Bridge, Northumberland, on 24 November 1788 at St Andrew in Newcastle upon Tyne. William Albany Otway passed away at Ryde on the Isle of Wight on 28 July 1815, having suffered several years of ill-health as a result of contracting the Walcheren Fever during 1809. His body was subsequently laid to rest in the south aisle of St Thomas church in Ryde in which a memorial tablet reads:-

“Near the North-West entrance of this chapel are interred the remains of the late William Albany Otway Esq. Vice Admiral of the White. He was born on the 26th Day of July 1755 and died on the 28th of July 1815. His afflicted widow has placed this tablet to his memory as one of the best and most affectionate husbands and father.”

### **(8) John Broughton**

John Broughton, who was born c.1767, was probably the son of John and Elizabeth Broughton baptized at St John the Baptist, Clerkenwell, on 1 November 1767. He entered the Royal Navy in June 1780 on board HMS Valiant, 74 guns, and cruising the Channel in Admiral Geary's fleet, took one of four French frigates with which they fell in and engaged, and afterwards re-captured the Fairy sloop-of-war. The Valiant then proceeded to Gibraltar, where they were employed in Admiral Darby's fleet charged with keeping off the Spanish gun-boats during the relief of that Station, in keeping off the Spanish gun-boats. Returning homewards, in the Western Ocean, an endeavour was made, without success, to bring a French fleet to action. After sailing for Spithead, the Valiant was then fitted out for the West Indies in order to join the fleet of Sir George Rodney at St Lucia in 1782, and Broughton was one of the few survivors of the action of the 9th and 12th of April, fought between the islands of Guadeloupe and Dominica.

After the action, the Valiant being despatched with Sir Samuel Hood in pursuit of stragglers, she fell in with, and engaged, single-handed, the two French line-of-battle ships Caton, 64, and Jason, 64, and taking them both, carried them down to Jamaica. The whole fleet going down from the West Indies to New York, Broughton, at the instance of Admiral Digby, left the Valiant, and went on board HMS Rhinoceros, 34 guns, an ex-merchantman which had been fitted out as a floating battery. On board the sloop-of-war HMS Bonatto, 16 guns, he was present at the capture of a fleet of French merchantmen, of which part were carried by the Bonatto into New York. After a successful cruise off Chesapeake Bay the Bonatto accompanied HMS Perseverance, from Spike and Devil's Creek, Hudson River, having on board Sir Grey Carleton, for conference with General Washington.

After continued arduous service on the American coast, Broughton was, at the recommendation of Lord Howe, appointed to the frigate HMS Phaeton, 38 guns. He subsequently entered HMS Elizabeth, 74 guns, and on completion of his midshipman's time was present, on 1 August 1789, at the review of the fleet at Plymouth by King George III, in HMS Carnatic, 74 guns. Also on that date, Broughton was commissioned Acting Lieutenant into HMS Goliath, 74 guns, with which he remained until 17 September. Confirmed in his rank, he served aboard HMS Gibraltar, 80 guns, as Fifth Lieutenant from 19 May until 18 October, 1790; and then as Sixth Lieutenant on HMS London, 90 guns, from 20 October 1790 until 19 January 1791.

Following his appointment on 3 December 1792 as Second Lieutenant on the frigate HMS Orpheus, 32 Guns, Broughton accompanied the Duke of York's expedition to Flanders. After service on the west coast of Africa, the Orpheus, fitted out at Portsmouth for the East, and as First Lieutenant of Commodore Newcome, off the Cape the Orpheus fell in with and captured single handed the French frigate Dougaytrouin, 36 guns, and carried her into Madras Roads. For his gallant action, on 7 January 1795 the Admiralty made Broughton a Commander, and after assisting at the capture of Malacca from the Dutch, he finally returned home and left HMS Orpheus on 14 November 1795.

On 28 August 1797, he was appointed commander and commanding officer of HMS Strombolo, 10 guns, which subsequently joined Lord St Vincent's fleet. The vessel was present at the blockade of Malta, and also assisted in the capture of the French warships Guillaume Tell and Le Generaux on their escape from the Nile prior to Broughton leaving the ship on 24 May 1800. Then, after receiving an autograph recommendation from Lord Nelson, on 25 June 1800 Broughton was posted as commander and commanding officer into HMS Fiorentina, 33 guns, at that time stationed at Malta.

Sailing thence for Egypt with troops, he assisted in Lord Keith's fleet at the landing of the forces at Alexandria, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, on which occasion he received from the Grand Sultan the decoration of the Crescent. On return from Malta, Broughton engaged and captured a French vessel having on board the French revolutionary Commander-in-Chief, M. Tallien, then attempting to escape from Egypt, but who he subsequently delivered up as a prisoner of war at Portsmouth. Promoted to Captain on 3 August 1801, Broughton continued to command the Fiorentina until 23 June 1802.

On 17 September 1803 he was appointed to HMS Magnanime, 36 guns, his task being to sail to the Bristol Channel and guard the entrance to the Port of Bristol from an anchorage in King Road, where the ship operated between 23 November 1803 and 22 June 1804. Broughton left the Magnanime on 10 September 1804, but it was not until 4 October 1806 that he joined HMS Polyphemus, 64 guns, and under Lord Keith was present at the bombardment of Le Havre.

A change of commander-in-chief saw Broughton transferred from the Polyphemus on 22 October, but on 10 November he commissioned the newly constructed HMS Meleager, 36 guns, which, in mid-1807, and accompanied by HMS Shannon, was sent on a mission to protect the whale fishery on the coast of Greenland. Nothing was found, and so on 23 August they were back in Leith Roads, seeking replenishment, having spent three months above the Arctic Circle. He then sailed for the Shetland Islands where he cruised for another month, while on 16 November 1807 the Meleager sailed with a convoy for the West Indies. However, while there Broughton contracted yellow fever forcing him to relinquish command of the Meleager on 22 April 1808 and to be invalided home aboard HMS Arethusa.

Having recovered, on 22 February 1810, he was appointed to HMS Indefatigable, 38 guns, in order to convey the China fleet out and home, and as he undertook the voyage in thirteen months, on his return he received the particular acknowledgments of the Honourable East India Company. The Indefatigable was then attached to the fleet in the Basque Roads, watching the movements of the French Admiral Gantheine, before Broughton relinquished command of her on 8 July 1812. The following day he was appointed to HMS Cornwall, 80 guns, but on 20 February 1813, following the death of a near relative, he resigned the command.

John Broughton finally received his flag as Rear-Admiral of the Blue on 22 July 1830, before being promoted to Rear-Admiral of the White on 10 January 1837. However, after suffering a painful illness he passed away at Dover on 2 October 1837, aged 70, and was subsequently buried at Charlton-Near-Dover on 7 October.

### **(9) Joseph Baker**

Joseph Baker was born in Bristol in 1767, the son of James Baker (born 1775) and his wife Nancy (1740 to 1810), whose family came from Ludlow in Shropshire and was related to Admiral James Vashon, who also came from that town. Baker, who was baptized at St Peter's, Bristol, on 10 January 1768, entered the Royal Navy in December 1781 joining the then Commander James Vashon aboard HMS Alert, 14 guns, which went out to the Leeward Islands with Admiral Sir George Rodney in early 1782. She was present at the Battle of the Saintes on 12 April, and two days later Vashon was posted to HMS Prince William, 64 guns, taking Baker with him. He afterwards remained with Vashon once the fleet reached Jamaica and that officer became Flag-Captain to Rodney aboard HMS Formidable, 90 guns. Both then transferred to HMS Sibyl, 28 guns, which was paid off in July 1783 after returning to England.

In January 1784 Baker joined the Plymouth guard-ship HMS Bombay Castle, 74, guns, before rejoining Vashon aboard HMS Europa, 50 guns, in 1786. The following year he was transferred to HMS Expedition, 44 guns, with both ships flying the broad pennant of Commodore Alan Gardner at Jamaica, and Baker remained on that Station for three years.

One of the Lieutenants aboard the Europa had been George Vancouver, and when Baker was commissioned Lieutenant on 19 November 1790 it was in order that he could serve aboard HMS Discovery, 10 guns, as the Third Lieutenant to that officer during his round the world voyage which focused on survey work in the American Pacific Northwest Coast. It departed England in April 1791, and during the course of the expedition Baker proved a highly capable surveyor and chart maker in addition to his other duties.

Unfortunately it started badly as after the Discovery had put in at Tenerife Baker was seriously beaten while trying to put down a sailor's brawl. The voyage then proceeded more smoothly to Cape Town, the south coast of Australia and New Zealand, while in Tahiti and Hawaii, then called the Sandwich Islands, he accompanied Archibald Menzies in botanical explorations. Nevertheless, most of the small-boat work in exploring the Northwest Coast of America was done by the more senior officers, while Baker specialized in converting their observations into nautical charts. When HMS Discovery explored Admiralty Inlet, Baker was the first Briton to see a prominent volcano which Vancouver named Mount Baker after him.

In 1794, while the Discovery wintered in Hawaii, Baker accompanying Menzies, Midshipman George McKenzie, and another man, made the first recorded ascent of Mauna Loa. Lacking any particular equipment for snow or altitude, they submitted at 13,681 feet, and took careful observation to accurately measure the height within a few dozen feet. During the voyage Baker frequently commanded Discovery when the other officers were away, and after Vancouver departed the ship in Shannon, Baker brought her safely home to Long Reach on the Thames, completing her five-year mission on 20 October 1795.

Not long after his arrival home Baker rejoined Captain Vashon aboard HMS Pompée, 74 guns, in the Channel, and he was present when the fleet mutiny broke out at Spithead on 16 April 1797. Then, on 1 March 1799 he was promoted to Commander and in November was appointed to the sloop HMS Calypso, 16 guns, that had just completed fitting at Plymouth, and with which he took a convoy out from Cork to the Leeward Islands in company with HMS Crescent, 36 guns. On 12 April 1800, and whilst off Cape Tiburon in Haiti, the Calypso's cutter cut out the armed schooner La Diligente, 6 guns. However, on 15 November they were attacked in the Mona Passage between the islands of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico by a Spanish squadron consisting of the Asia, 64 guns, Amphitrite, 44 guns, and the privateer Le Ganso, 16 guns, but they managed to protect the convoy, while the Calypso even captured the privateer.

Baker remained on the Jamaican Station, and the Calypso conveyed troops from Jamaica to Honduras in March 1801. On 21 November he was posted to the Port Royal, Jamaica, guard-ship HMS Abergavenny, 54 guns, although his rank as Captain was only confirmed with seniority from 26 April 1802.

In October 1801 he was appointed to HMS Ganges, 74 guns, in succession to Captain Thomas Fremantle, which ship had just arrived in the West Indies with Commodore William Essington's reinforcement for the Jamaican Station, but with peace having been established he relinquished command in September 1802 and subsequently returned to Plymouth as a passenger.

At the start of the Napoleonic War he was appointed Agent for Prisoner's of War at the Admiralty Prison at Stapleton near Bristol, a situation he continued to hold for several years, his daughter Josephine Puget Baker being born at Stapleton in 1805. Then, in March of that year, Baker was appointed to the frigate HMS Castor, 32 guns. She served out of the Leith Station, where his patron Rear-Admiral Vashon was the Commander-in-Chief, before going into Sheerness for repairs in the following March, whereupon Baker left her and subsequently spent a period of unemployment at his family home at Presteigne in Radnorshire.



On 16 May 1808 he was appointed to command HMS Tartar, 32 guns, at Leith, and on 15 May 1808 was in action at Bergen. Then, on 3 November, whilst escorting a convoy off the Naze of Norway, she captured the newly launched Danish privateer Naargske Gутten, 7 guns, after a three and a half hour chase. Serving off the Danish coast in May 1809, Baker sent in his boats on the 15th to take a four-gun Danish privateer off Courland which he had driven on shore near Felixberg. The crew fled ashore and with the aid of local civilians they began firing at the British boats. Most fortuitously one of the prize crew discovered that the enemy had attempted to booby-trap the magazine by placing a lighted candle in a twelve pounder cartridge of gunpowder, and it was de-fused after burning to within a half-inch of the powder, and before it could blow the ship and the boarding party apart.

In January 1810 the Tartar arrived back at Portsmouth from a cruise, and in February went into Plymouth for repairs before sailing out to the Baltic for the rest of the year. She then entered Portsmouth once more in January 1811, prior to heading for the North Sea. On 27 March the Tartar dramatically tipped the scales in the defence of the captured island of Anholt in the Kattegat when she arrived from Yarmouth to scatter a flotilla of Danish gunboats and thereby allow Captain James Wilkes Maurice to repulse the enemy.

Finally, on 18 August 1811 and whilst on a cruise off the Russian coast the Tartar grounded near Hiiumaa Island in Estonia, but after four days hard pumping the resulting leak forced Baker to beach her at Kahar Inlet on nearby Vormsi and set her on fire. The crew then sought refuge ashore but were soon rescued by the frigate HMS Ethalion. At the resultant Court Martial in Portsmouth on 23 October Captain Baker, his officers and crew, were honourably acquitted for the loss of their frigate, but Barker did not see any further service at sea.

On 28 May 1797 at St Mary in Newington in Surrey, he had married Elizabeth Weyerman (1774 to 1841), by whom he went on to have nine children. Joseph Baker finally passed away on 26 June 1817 at the family home at Presteigne, and was subsequently buried at the nearby St Andrew's parish church.

### **(10) Edward Crawley**

Edmund Crawley, who was born about 1756, was said to have been the son of a Royal Navy purser. In May 1769 he entered the Royal Navy as a Midshipman on board HMS Senegal, 14 guns, on the Halifax Station. He subsequently transferred to His Majesty's ships Kingfisher (14), Fowey (24), Romney (50), and Europe (64), before, on 7 May 1778, being made a Lieutenant on the Cornwall, 74 guns, on board which he continued to serve until she sank at St Lucia in June 1780. Crawley was then appointed Second Lieutenant of HMS Solebay, 28 guns, that was subsequently employed on the Irish Station, in North America, and in the Bristol Channel.

From March to December 1780 he was acting commander of the sloop HMS Savage, 14 guns, on the coast of America and in the West Indies, before transferring as First Lieutenant of the Prince George, 90 guns. Crawley was appointed Commander on 9 April 1783, the day on which he took command of HMS Carolina, 24 guns, while, on 15 April, he transferring to the Albacore, 16 guns, a vessel with which he remained until March 1784.

Another major international incident, known as the Spanish Armament, began in May 1790 when a Spanish expedition was sent to Vancouver in Canada to eject a new British settlement. In retaliation, during August and September the Royal Navy dispatched a large fleet from Britain, followed by another from the West Indies in October. With the situation tense, on 28 September 1790 Crawley was promoted to Captain, on which day he was appointed to command the sloop HMS Wasp, 14 guns, that was to be employed in the English Channel. He remained her commander until 22 November, when he was transferred as Post Captain to HMS Sceptre, 64 guns. However, by that time the Spanish had backed down and Crawley did not further serve on that ship, after which he was reduced to half-pay.

In April 1795 he was appointed to command HMS Adventure, 44 guns, before proceeding to Quebec in charge of a large convoy which he conducted without the loss of a ship. As a result

he received a letter of thanks from the Committee at Lloyd's for the able manner in which that service had been performed. After returning to England, in October 1795 Crawley was placed in command of HMS Lion, 64 guns, and, after she had joined the Channel Division, he took part in the ill fated expedition to the West Indies under Admiral Christian.

On his return, and still in HMS Lion, he was attached to Admiral Duncan's fleet on the North Sea Station, where he continued until June 1797. Then, owing to his health becoming affected by his long sea service, and being much affected by the mutiny at the Nore in May 1797, Crawley requested to be relieved of command of the Lion. That terminated his services at sea, and in 1799 he was once more placed on half-pay.

However, in March 1805 he was appointed Agent for Prisoner's of War at the Admiralty Prison at Stapleton near Bristol, a situation he continued to hold until being appointed Rear-Admiral of the Blue on 25 October 1809. Nevertheless, owing to severe personal suffering, which rendered him physically incapable of duty afloat, he was compelled to forgo the gratification of offering himself for service as a Flag-Officer. Crawley was advanced to Rear-Admiral of the White on 31 July 1810, Rear-Admiral of the Red on 13 August 1812, Vice-Admiral of the Blue on 4 June 1814, and Admiral of the White on 22 July 1830.

He was the father of the Reverend E.J. Crawley minister of Trinity Church in Bath, and it was also to that city that he retired from professional duty. Consequently, it was at Seymour Street on 8 January 1824, that his 65 year old wife Elizabeth died and was subsequently buried in the churchyard of St Mary at Claverton on the 17th. On 4 November 1834 Edmund Crawley passed away at Water House, Stoke near Bath, aged 79, at which time he was described as an officer highly respected and beloved in the service, an excellent seaman and a truly just and kind-hearted man. He was finally laid to rest on 11 November 1834, also in the churchyard of St Mary at Claverton.

#### **(11) Andrew Fitzherbert Evans**

Andrew Fitzherbert Evans was born at Knightsbridge in London on 8 November 1766, the son of Thomas Evan Evans (1735 to 1799), an apothecary surgeon, and his wife Mary Ann Hamilton (1745 to 1766). He subsequently embarked on a career in the Royal Navy and was commissioned Lieutenant on 1 December 1787, before being appointed Commander on 12 September 1795. Then, on 4 May 1796, and while commanding the sloop HMS Spencer, 14 guns, he captured La Volcan, a French corvette of 12 guns, pierced for 16, and a crew of 95 men, following a brisk action off Bermuda. On 15 April 1798 he was commissioned Post Captain, and then appointed to command HMS Porcupine, 24 guns. In August she sailed for the Halifax Station, and later Evans served with her on the Jamaica Station until she was paid off on 8 October 1802.

Following the start of the Napoleonic Wars, on April 1803 Evans was appointed to command HMS Aeolus, 32 guns, and on 27 July 1803, while taking part in the blockade of Cap Francois, St Domingo, was involved in the capture of the French vessel Duquesne, 74 guns. A kindly and practical Post Captain, in May 1804 he transferred to HMS Vanguard, 74 guns, to operate off Jamaica, but in 1805 Evans is recorded as commanding HMS Veteran, 64 guns, again at Jamaica.

Following his return to England, Evans served as Agent for Prisoner's of War at the Admiralty Prison at Stapleton near Bristol, a situation he held from November 1808 until April 1811, when was appointed a resident Commissioner of the Navy at Bermuda. He arrived on the Bermuda Station with the rank of Flag Officer Commodore, and later in 1811 he took command of HMS Tourterelle, 28 guns. However, as it had been decided that she was to be sunk as a breakwater, during 1816 and 1817 Evans had a broad pendant flying on board HMS Ruby, 64 guns.

Following his return to England he eventually retired to Jersey in the Channel Islands, before finally being appointed Rear Admiral of the Blue on 27 May 1825. At St Peter's church, St Georges, Bermuda, on 20 September 1794, he had married Jehoadden Tucker (1773 to 1833), with whom he had ten children, all born between 1795 and 1814. Andrew Fitzherbert

Evans passed away at St Helier on 6 June 1826, and was subsequently buried at St Saviour on 9 June, aged 59.

### **(12) Micajah Malbon**

Micajah Malbon, the son of Micaiah Malbon and his wife Eleanor, was baptized at St Paul, Shadwell in London, on 2 March 1763. He embarked on a career in the Royal Navy in 1779, and on 7 January 1783 was commissioned Lieutenant. In October 1790 he was appointed to his first command, the experimental 8 gun cutter Trial which incorporated three sliding keels, and during that month he commissioned it for the channel. Malbon remained with her until August 1795, during which time a number of tests were carried out that proved the design very successful. That was reflected in the reports of her officers dated 21 February 1791 and April 1792, while the categorical answers to a list of questions as to her handiness and seaworthiness were extremely favourable. Sailing trials were carried out against five cutters, three square rigger ships, and a brig, all of which she beat, and in answer to a question Lieutenant Micajah Malbon stated; "I never was with any King's cutter that beat her."

On 25 April 1795 he was appointed Commander, and in August of that year was transferred to HMS Kite, 18 guns, which had just completed its fitting out at Deptford, and after commissioning her she operated in the North Sea. The next vessel Malbon was to command was the sloop HMS Cynthia, 18 guns, which he commissioned at Deptford Dockyard in March 1796. Then, on 5 October 1796, the Cynthia, along with the Diamond, Syren and Melampus, captured the Spanish ship Nostra Señora Del Carmen, while on 19 April 1797, and accompanied by His Majesty's Ships Diamond, Minerva, Camilla and the hired armed cutter Grand Falconer, she took part in the capture the American ship Favourite. The Cynthia, Cormorant and St Fiorenzo also recaptured the American vessel Betty before, on 24 November 1797, the Cynthia, Cormorant, and the Grand Falconer took the French merchant sloop Necessaire.

On 15 February 1798 the Cynthia was in company with the Cormorant when they captured the Prussian galiot Welwaert, while on 28 August 1799 she was serving with the British fleet that captured the Dutch hulks Drotchterland and Brooderschap, and the ships Helder, Venus, Minerva, and Hector in the Nieuwediep harbour in Holland. In June 1800 the Cynthia was part of a squadron that had been directed to co-operate with the insurgent French Royalists in the Morbihan, in Brittany, and operations began when the British ships anchored in Quiberon Bay on 2 June. On the 4th, HMS Thames, the Cynthia, and some small-craft, attacked the south-west end of Quiberon and silenced the forts. Troops then landed and destroyed them, and although the attack resulted in the Royal Navy taking several vessels and scuttling others, the only casualties were in the Cynthia, which lost two men killed and one wounded.

After a successful deployment aboard HMS Cynthia, Malbon finally relinquished command of her on 11 August 1800, the day on which he was promoted to the rank of Post-Captain. In May 1802 he was appointed to command HMS Aurora, 28 guns, and in December he sailed her from Portsmouth, via Lisbon, to Newfoundland, before returning the following month. After transporting troops to Jersey in April and May 1803, during the latter month the Aurora set sail again for Newfoundland. There, on 26 June, Malbon heard that war had been resumed with France, and consequently he sailed for the nearby French island of St Pierre, where he arrived on the 30th and took its surrender.

In December 1803, the Aurora arrived back at Portsmouth, via Lisbon, carrying a quantity of bullion. Then, in January 1804, Malbon sailed the Aurora to Plymouth from where for most of the rest of the year he was kept busy escorting trans-Atlantic convoys on the first part of their voyages, and in protecting returning ships on the last part of the journey from Cape Finisterre back to England. In January 1805 Malbon left the Aurora, having been appointed to command the new frigate HMS Hebe, 32 guns, which was then being fitting out at Deptford Dockyard, after which he commissioned her.

The Hebe went on to take part in the action off Calais on 18 July 1805 when the French attempted a diversionary action in support of the main Dutch invasion flotilla. That operation involved several divisions of gun-vessels at Boulogne getting under way as if to attack the

British squadron at anchor off the port. In response, the Hebe, accompanied by His Majesty's Ships Immortalite, 36 guns, and Arab, 20 guns, weighed anchor, met the enemy's craft, and ultimately drove them under the batteries north-west of Wimereux. The Immortalite and Hebe drew too much water to get within effective range of the smaller enemy vessels, and so confined their attention chiefly to the prames and, although they were ultimately joined by HMS Renommee, 36 guns, they managed only to drive ashore two schooner gun-vessels. During the action the Immortalite lost four killed and twelve wounded, and the Hebe one killed and two wounded, and as both vessels had suffered rather severe damage in the rigging and hull, they were obliged to retire for repairs.

Later the Hebe was ordered to sail down the coast of Africa, prior to proceeding to the West Indies, and on 21 October was reported off Gorée in Sengal. Finally, in October 1807, Malbon was transferred from HMS Hebe, to take command of HMS Adamant, 50 guns, which had been in the West Indies since May 1807. Unfortunately a hurricane which hit the island of Curaçao, where Malbon was then acting as Deputy-Governor, parted fastenings in the Adamant, and for a time put her in imminent danger. He remained in the West Indies until 21 July 1808 when the Jamaica Fleet, accompanied by the Adamant, set sail for England where, on 10 October, he relinquished command of the ship.

Malbon, who was residing in Portsea when he made his will on 10 December 1810, was already a sick man when, in April 1811, he took over as Agent for Prisoner's of War at the Admiralty Prison at Stapleton near Bristol. Consequently, his tenure was relatively short, as after a few days serious illness he died at Stapleton on 12 June 1813 before, on the 17<sup>th</sup>, being buried at St Paul's in Portland Square, Bristol. A notice of his death stated that he had devoted 34 years of his life to His Majesty's service, distinguished himself in many engagements, and left behind "an amiable widow, four children, and many friends to deplore his loss." He had in fact married twice, the first occasion being on 14 October 1797 at St Mary's in Portsea when his bride was Mary Monnie. However, she died at Portsea in October 1803 and, as a widower, on 28 February 1809 he married Jane Lumsden, again at Portsea.

### **(13) James Stevenson**

James Stevenson, who was born about 1760, was commissioned Lieutenant in the Royal Navy on 16 November 1790, before being promoted to Master and Commander on 7 September 1795 in order to take command of the old Bristol built armed store-ship HMS Charon, 44 guns, which by 1795 was based at Portsmouth. In October the Charon joined Admiral Harvey's fleet off the coast of France, but on 7 December 1795 sailed for the Leeward Islands along with HMS Expedition, both ships having been ordered to escort a convoy of about 70 transports with stores and troops under Rear-Admiral Christian to Barbados.

On 9 March 1796 the Charon, in company with HMS Pique, 34 guns, took the 12 gun French privateer brig Le Lacédémonien off Barbados. Then, on 27 April, a squadron, including the Charon, arrived with troops at the Island of St Lucia, and the capture of the island was achieved by 26 May. The Charon, in company with His Majesty's ships Veteran, 64 guns, and Ganges, 74 guns, then escorted a large fleet of West Indiamen and transports in convoy back to England, arriving at Plymouth on 20 September 1796, while in February 1797 Stevenson's posting as commander of the Charon came to an end.

He was promoted to Captain on 12 February 1798 and posted to re-commission and subsequently take command of the troop-ship HMS Europa, 50 guns, which completed its fitting at Portsmouth in April. During 1799 she went on to carry troops to and from a number of localities, including Ireland and Portugal, and then, between 1 and 6 June 1800, was one of the six troop transports attached to a squadron operating in Quiberon Bay that had been order to co-operate with the insurgent French Royalists in the Morbihan, in Brittany.

In 1801 the Europa, which was still under Stevenson's command, went on to serve as a troop-ship during the British expedition to Egypt. That began on 22 February 1801 when the fleet set sail with General Sir Ralph Abercromby's army aboard, before finally coming to anchor off Aboukir Bay on 2 March, some 13 miles from the city-port of Alexandria. Although

a landing was planned for the following day, a gale prevented it from taking place until the morning of the 8th. After the Royal Navy boats had unloaded the initial landing force, they returned to the fleet to collect the rest of the army from the transports and to land them. In the rear of these were 14 cutters, each carrying a gun and a crew of seamen and gunners, commanded by Captain Sir Sidney Smith, while on each wing of the flotilla were two gunboats and a bomb ship.

The whole of the army had been landed before dark prior to advancing into a plain where they halted for the night, although the Royal Navy had suffered 7 officers and 90 men killed or wounded during the operation. The *Europa* was not immune, as during the disembarkation one seaman and one officer had been wounded. On 12 March 1801 the British army began its march along the isthmus towards Alexandria, while on the 18th the French garrison surrendered Aboukir Castle. Then, on the 21st, the British took the Great Redoubt near Alexandria, forcing the French to withdraw to defensive positions nearer the city.

On 26 April, Major-General Hutchinson arrived at Rosetta to take command of operations against the French in the interior of Egypt, and on 5 May he marched a combined force of British and Turks along the banks of the Nile towards the French position at El-Aft. They were accompanied on the river by a flotilla of British and Turkish gun-boats under Captain James Stevenson of the troop ship *HMS Europa* who, following the resignation of Captain Sir Sidney Smith, succeeded him as commander of the sloops of war, bombs, &c. On the 7th the French abandoned El-Aft and retreated towards Rahmanieh, and the same evening the allied troops entered El-Aft, while on the 9th they advanced to Rahmanieh, which surrendered the following day.

The possession of that important post effectually cut off all communication between Alexandria and the interior of Egypt. Operating from his headquarters at Mehallet Malik, Stevenson had regulated the disposition of the Turkish gun-boats and djerns under his orders so successfully that Major-General Hutchinson went on to make honourable mention of him in his dispatches of the fall of Rahmanieh.

Stevenson remained with the *Europa* until, in July 1801, it was announced that he was to be transferred to take command of *HMS Africaine*, 38 guns, previously the French frigate *L'Africaine* that had been captured by *HMS Phoebe* in the Mediterranean on 19 February 1801. She had been commissioned into the Royal Navy in May, and Stevenson finally arrived aboard on 15 August. Then, on 2 September 1801, the French signed terms of capitulation whereby they surrendered the city of Alexandria and the French army in Egypt was taken into captivity and eventually returned to France.

Following the end of hostilities in Egypt, during January 1802 the majority of the British army serving there had been transferred to Malta, from where the *Africaine* was ordered to carry troops back to England. On her arrival back home she was put under quarantine at Motherbank off the Isle of Wight, before, on 3 February 1802, it was reported that she had been released, and on the 9th was at Deal. From there the *Africaine* sailed northwards before, on the 11th, being reported off Sheerness and heading up the Thames, prior to arriving at Deptford where she was paid off on the 17th.

Stevenson does not appear to have commanded any ships during the Napoleonic Wars, but following the death on 12 June 1813 of Captain Micajah Malbon, the serving Agent for Prisoner's of War at the Admiralty Prison at Stapleton near Bristol, Captain James Stevenson was selected as his replacement. His appointment was announced in early July 1813, and following the Treaty of Paris, signed on 30 May 1814, his last duty was organize the release of all the prisoners at Stapleton. Sadly, on 10 May 1818 he died on his passage from Leith to Aberdeen, at which time he was described as "an officer whose long and meritorious services had gained him the esteem of his brother officers, and numerous friends and acquaintances."